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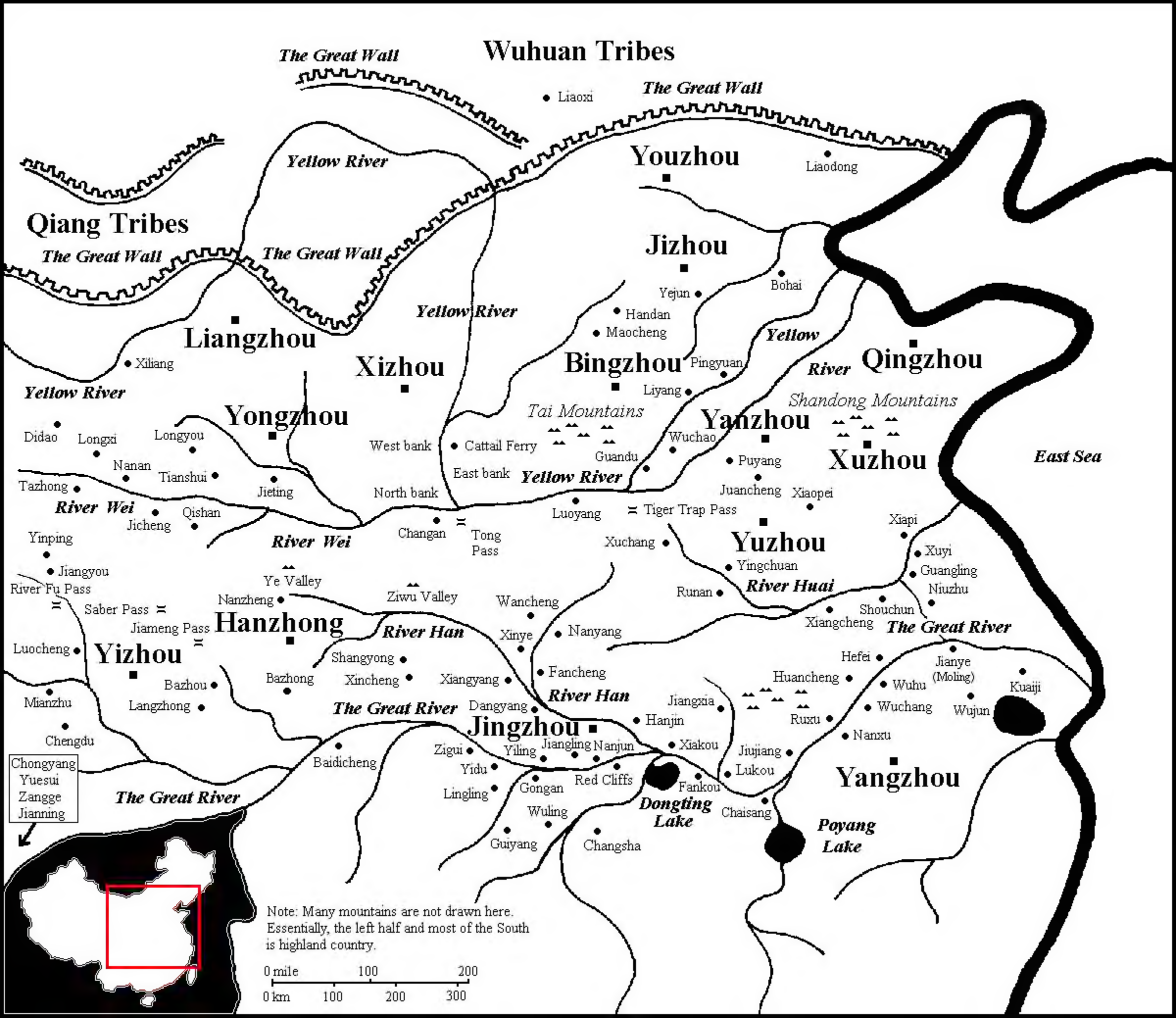
SANGOKUSHI

31

MA CHAO'S RETALIATION

YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU

MA CHAO MENGQI


Wuhuan Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Liaoxi
Youzhou
Liaodong
Yellow River
Qiang Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Jizhou
Bohai
Yejun
Handan
Maocheng
Yellow River
Liangzhou
Xizhou
Bingzhou
Pingyuan
Yellow River
Qingzhou
Xiliang
Yellow River
Liyang
Shandong Mountains
Tai Mountains
Yongzhou
Yanzhou
Didao
Longxi
Longyou
West bank
Cattail Ferry
Wuchao
Guandu
Xuzhou
East Sea
Nanan
East bank
Yellow River
Puyang
Tianshui
Tazhong
Jieting
North bank
Juancheng
Xiaopei
River Wei
Qishan
Luoyang
Tiger Trap Pass
Jicheng
Changan
Tong Pass
Xiapi
Yuzhou
Yinping
River Wei
Xuchang
Xuyi
Jiangyou
Ye Valley
Yingchuan
Guangling
River Fu Pass
Ziwu Valley
Runan
River Huai
Niuzhu
Saber Pass
Nanzheng
Wancheng
Shouchun
Jiameng Pass
Hanzhong
River Han
Xinye
Nanyang
Xiangcheng
The Great River
Luocheng
Yizhou
Shangyong
Hefei
Jianye (Moling)
Fancheng
Huancheng
Bazhou
Bazhong
Xincheng
Xiangyang
Wuhu
Kuaiji
River Han
Jiangxia
Mianzhu
Langzhong
The Great River
Dangyang
Wuchang
Wujun
Ruxu
Hanjin
Jingzhou
Chengdu
Nanxu
Zigui
Yiling
Jiangling
Nanjun
Xiakou
Jiujiang
Baidicheng
Yidu
Lukou
Yangzhou
Chongyang
Yuesui
Zangge
Jianning
Red Cliffs
Fankou
Gongan
Lingling
Dongting Lake
Chaisang
Wuling
Poyang Lake
Guiyang
Changsha
The Great River
Note: Many mountains are not drawn here.
Essentially, the left half and most of the South
is highland country.
0 mile 100 200
0 km 100 200 300

SANGOKUSHI'S CAST OF CHARACTERS

PART 1: CHARACTERS TO KEEP IN MIND

CAO CAO MENGDE:
THE AMBITIOUS AND MACHIAVELLIAN HERO OF SANGOKUSHI. HAVING BECOME THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, HE HAS RELEGATED EMPEROR XIAN AS A MERE PUPPET RULER.

CHEN DENG:
THE SON OF CHEN GUI AND FORMERLY TAO QIAN OF XUZHOU'S SUBORDINATE. HE AND HIS FATHER SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL.

CHEN GUI:
FATHER OF CHEN DENG WHO SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL. DESPITE SECRETLY WORKING TOGETHER WITH LIU BEI AGAINST CAO CAO, CAO CAO SPARES HIS LIFE AND ALLOWS HIM TO CONTINUE LIVING IN XUZHOU.

CHENG GONG:
A CITY GUARD CAPTAIN WHO ARRESTED CAO CAO, ONLY TO FREE AND ESCAPE WITH HIM AFTER SYMPATHIZING WITH HIS STORY. HOWEVER, HE LATER DEFECTS TO LU BU AND SERVES AS HIS ADVISOR. IN VOLUME 14, HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH LU BU.

EMPRESS HE:
ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HER BEAUTY WAS NOTICED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS WHO THEN PRESENTED HER TO EMPEROR LING. SHE SOON BECAME EMPEROR LING'S FAVOURITE CONSORT AND GAVE BIRTH TO PRINCE LIU BIAN. HOWEVER, SHE AND HER SON WERE REMOVED FROM POWER AND KILLED BY DONG ZHUO WHEN HE CAME TO POWER.

DIAN WEI:
CAO CAO'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD, RENOWNED FOR HIS STRENGTH. HE IS ALSO KNOWN BY THE NICKNAME, "E LAI," IN REFERENCE TO THE MIGHTY GENERAL OF THE SAME NAME WHO SERVED UNDER KING ZHOU OF SHANG. IN VOLUME 12, HE WAS KILLED DURING ZHANG XIU'S PLOT TO KILL CAO CAO.

DIAO CHAN:
A SLAVE GIRL OF WANG YUN, WHO RAISED HER AS HIS OWN DAUGHTER. SHE AND WANG YUN PLOTTED TO DISTANCE LU BU FROM DONG ZHUO BY HAVING HER SEDUCE BOTH MEN. IN VOLUME 8, SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE AFTER ACCOMPLISHING HER GOAL.

DONG CHENG:
ELDER STATESMAN OF HAN WHO IS EMPEROR XIAN'S CONFIDANT. EMPEROR XIAN SECRETELY ASKS HIM TO ELIMINATE CAO CAO, WHO NOW RULES THE IMPERIAL COURT AS CHANCELLOR. IN VOLUME 17, HE IS EXECUTED AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION PLOT IS FOUND OUT BY CAO CAO.

DONG ZHUO:
GOVERNOR OF LIANGZHOU WHO LATER SEIZED CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND SEATED HIMSELF AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, BECOMING AN INFAMOUS TYRANT. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, LU BU.

GAN NING:
FORMER-PIRATE WHO IS NOW A FIRECE GENERAL OF WU.

GONGSUN ZAN:
GOVERNOR OF BEIPING AND FRIEND TO LIU BEI. HE WAGES WAR AGAINST YUAN SHAO AFTER THE LATTER TRICKS HIM AND KILLS HIS YOUNG BROTHER. IN VOLUME 15, YUAN SHAO'S ARMY CONQUERS BEIPING, CAUSING GONGSUN ZAN TO COMMIT SUICIDE.

GUAN YU YUNCHANG:
SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER TO LIU BEI AND SWORN OLDER BROTHER TO ZHANG FEI. HE IS AS FIERCE AS GUAN YU BUT IS MORE RESTRAINED AND CALM IN HIS MANNERISMS.

GUAN PING:
GUAN YU'S ADOPTED SON WHO FIRST APPEARS IN VOLUME 19.

GUO JIA:
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO CAO CAO. HE DIES FROM ILLNESS DURING CAO CAO'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE YUAN FAMILY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).

HUANG ZHONG:
AN ELDERLY WARRIOR GENERAL RENOWNED ESPECIALLY FOR HIS SKILL WITH THE BOW. FORMERLY SERVED LIU BIAO AND HAN XUAN BUT SINCE THE END OF V28, HE NOW SERVES LIU BEI.

JIA XU:
THE SHREWD STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO ZHANG XIU. HE AND ZHANG XIU PLOTS A FAILED ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON CAO CAO, BUT SUCCEEDS IN KILLING DIAN WEI. IN VOLUME 16, HE AND ZHANG XIU DEFECT TO CAO CAO'S SIDE.

LI RU:
CUNNING ADVISOR TO DONG ZHUO. WITH HIS ADVICE, DONG ZHUO FIRMLY SECURES HIS SEAT AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED ALONG WITH DONG ZHUO WHEN LU BU REBELS.

LIU BEI XUANDE:
THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF SANGOKUSHI. A KIND AND VIRTUOUS MAN, SAID TO BE THE DESCENDANT OF EMPEROR JING OF HAN. HE HAS SWORN AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD WITH GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI.

LIU BIAO:
THE GOVERNOR OF JINGZHOU. HE PASSES AWAY DUE TO SICKNESS IN VOLUME 22.

LIU XIE (EMPEROR XIAN OF HAN):
FORMERLY KNOWN AS PRINCE OF CHENLIU, HE IS THE CURRENT EMPEROR OF HAN, THOUGH CAO CAO HAS SEIZED ALL REAL POWER AWAY FROM HIM.

LU BU:
HE IS SAID TO BE THE STRONGEST WARRIOR WITH THE FASTEST HORSE, THE RED HARE. IN VOLUME 14, HE WAS BETRAYED BY HIS SUBORDINATES, AND EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.

LU SU:
MILITARY GENERAL AND ADVISOR OF WU.

MA TENG:
GOVERNOR OF XILIANG AND FATHER OF MA CHAO. UNLIKE THE ACTUAL HISTORICAL FIGURE, HE IS DEPICTED AS A HAN LOYALIST WHO SIGNS DONG CHENG'S BLOOD SEAL PLEDGE.

PANG TONG SHIYUAN:
NICKNAMED THE YOUNG PHOENIX (FENGCHU), HE IS A MASTERFUL STRATEGIST WHO STUDIED UNDER SHUI JING, ALONG WITH ZHUGE LIANG AND XU SHU. HE CURRENTLY SERVES NO LORD BUT ASSISTS WU IN THE BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS.

SHUI JING:
HIS REAL NAME IS SIMA HUI BUT HE IS MORE COMMONLY KNOWN BY HIS TAOIST NAME, SHUI JING (MEANING WATER MIRROR). HE IS THE TEACHER OF ZHUGE LIANG, PANG TONG, AND XU SHU.

SUN CE:
ELDEST SON OF SUN JIAN. IN VOLUME 19, ASSASSINS MAKE A FAILED ATTEMPT AT HIS LIFE. HIS MENTAL HEALTH SOON DETERIORATES DUE TO THE INCIDENT WITH YU JI AND HE SUCCUMBS TO DEATH.

SUN JIAN:
BORN IN WU COMMANDERY, HE WAS THE GOVERNOR OF CHANGSHA. HE PARTICIPATES IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO. BUT IS FINDING OF THE IMPERIAL SEAL CAUSES LIU BIAO AND YUAN SHAO TO TURN ON HIM. IN VOLUME 7, HE TRIES TO EXACT HIS REVENGE ON LIU BIAO, ONLY TO BE KILLED IN BATTLE.

SUN QUAN:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF SUN CE AND THE CURRENT RULER OF WU, A REGION IN SOUTHERN CHINA.

TAISHI CI:
GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED LIU YAO BUT DEFECTED TO SUN CE IN VOLUME 11. DURING THE BATTLE OF HEFEI (VOL. 29), HE FALLS PREY TO ZHANG LIAO'S PLAN AND IS KILLED IN BATTLE.

TAO QIAN:
THE KIND GOVERNOR OF XUZHOU WHO ACCIDENTALLY INVOKES CAO CAO'S WRATH WHEN HIS DISLOYAL SUBORDINATE ZHANG KAI KILLS CAO CAO'S FATHER, CAO SONG.

THE TEN ATTENDANTS:
A CORRUPT GROUP OF 10 EUNUCHS WHO WERE THE HIGHEST RANKING MINISTERS OF THE IMPERIAL COURT. THEY SUCCEEDED IN ASSASSINATING GENERAL HE JIN BUT WERE LATER KILLED BY HE JIN'S ARMY LED BY YUAN SHAO.

WANG YUN:
THE MINISTER OF THE MASSES, ONE OF THE 3 HIGHEST RANKING POSTS IN THE IMPERIAL COURT. HE SUCCESSFULLY PLOTS DONG ZHUO'S DOWNFALL USING DIAO CHANG IN VOLUME 8. HOWEVER, HE IS LATER KILLED BY REMNANTS OF DONG ZHUO'S ARMY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).

WEI YAN:
GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED LIU BIAO AND HAN XUAN ALONG WITH HUANG ZHONG BUT SINCE THE END OF V28, HE NOW SERVES LIU BEI.

WEN CHOU:
HE AND YANG LIANG ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 18, HE IS AMBUSHED BY CAO CAO'S ARMY AND KILLED BY GUAN YU.

XIAHOU DUN:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. HE LOST HIS LEFT EYE DURING A BATTLE AGAINST LU BU'S ARMY IN VOLUME 13.

XU CHU:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HE WAS RECRUITED BY CAO CAO WHO WAS IMPRESSED AFTER SEEING XU CHU'S DUEL WITH DIAN WEI.

XU SHU (SHAN FU):
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST WHO STUDIED UNDER SHUI JING. AFTER A BRIEF STINT OF SERVING LIU BEI, HE IS TRICKED INTO COMING TO XUCHANG AND SERVING CAO CAO (VOLUME 21).

XUN YU:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S MOST TALENTED ADVISORS.

YAN LIANG:
HE AND WEN CHOU ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 17, HE WAS KILLED BY GUAN YU WHILE FIGHTING CAO CAO'S ARMY AT BAIMA.

YI JI:
AN ADVISOR TO LIU BIAO WHO WARNS LIU BEI ABOUT CAI MAO'S PLOT TO ASSASSINATE LIU BEI IN VOLUME 20.

YUAN SHAO:
OLDER BROTHER OF YUAN SHU AND THE GOVERNOR OF JIZHOU. AFTER MANY YEARS OF WARRING AGAINST CAO CAO FOR CONTROL OF NORTHERN CHINA, HE AND HIS FAMILY IS DEFEATED AND KILLED.

YUAN SHU:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF YUAN SHAO AND THE GOVERNOR OF NANYANG. AFTER RECEIVING THE IMPERIAL SEAL FROM SUN CE, HE DECLARES HIMSELF AS THE EMPEROR OF ZHONG DYNASTY. IN VOLUME 15, HE DIES OF THIRST AFTER BEING ON THE RUN FROM LIU BEI AND CAO CAO'S ARMIES.

ZHANG FEI YIDE:
A FIRECE, SHORT-TEMPERED WARRIOR WHO IS THE SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER OF LIU BEI AND GUAN YU.

ZHANG LIAO:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S TOP GENERALS. HE WAS FORMERLY LU BU'S SUBORDINATE BUT DEFECTED TO CAO CAO AFTER THE FORMER'S EXECUTION.

ZHANG XIU:
LORD OF WANCHENG WHO ATTEMPTED TO KILL CAO CAO DURING THE BATTLE OF WANCHENG IN VOLUME 12. AFTER YEARS OF CONFLICT AGAINST CAO CAO, HE FINALLY DECIDES TO DEFECT TO CAO CAO IN VOLUME 16.

ZHAO YUN ZILONG:
A FORMER RETAINER TO YUAN SHAO WHO LATER DEFECTED TO SERVE GONGSUN ZAN. AFTER GONGSUN ZAN'S DEATH, HE LATER MEETS UP WITH LIU BEI AND FINALLY BECOMES HIS RETAINER.

ZHOU CANG:
FORMERLY A YELLOW TURBAN, HE MEETS GUAN YU IN VOLUME 18 AND BECOMES HIS SUBORDINATE.

ZHOU YU GONGJIN:
SWORN BROTHER OF SUN CE, HE IS A SKILLED ADMIRAL WHO SERVES AS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FOR WU'S ARMY. CONVINCED THAT HIS ALLY KONGMING IS TOO MUCH OF A THREAT, HE CURRENTLY SCHEMES FOR HIS DEATH.

ZHUGE LIANG KONGMING:
MASTERFUL STRATEGIST AND FORMER STUDENT OF SHUI JING. IN VOLUME 21, HE YIELDS TO LIU BEI'S PERSISTENCE AND DECIDES TO BECOME HIS SUBJECT.

SANGOKUSHI'S CAST OF CHARACTERS
PART 2: OTHER MINOR CHARACTERS

CAI MAO:
FORMER GENERAL OF LIU BIAO, WHO BECAME THE SUPREME ADMIRAL OF WEI'S NAVY WHEN JINGZHOU SURRENDERED TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 25, HE IS FRAMED BY ZHOU YU'S PLOT AND THUS EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.

CAO REN:
GENERAL SERVING UNDER CAO CAO.

CAO HONG:
GENERAL AND COUSIN TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 6, HE SAVES CAO CAO FROM CERTAIN DEATH.

CAO SONG:
CAO CAO'S FATHER AND A FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED BY TAO QIAN'S ESCORT AND FORMER YELLOW TURBAN, ZHANG KAI.

DING YUAN:
GOVERNOR OF BINGZHOU AND LU BU'S FOSTER-FATHER. HE OBJECTED TO DONG ZHUO'S SCHEME TO PLACE PRINCE CHENLIU AS THE EMPEROR OF HAN, EARNING DONG ZHUO'S WRATH. IN VOLUME 4, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS FOSTER-SON, LU BU, WHO THEN DEFECTS TO SERVE DONG ZHUO.

EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG:
MOTHER TO THE FORMER EMPEROR LING AND GRANDMOTHER TO EMPEROR XIAN. IN VOLUME 3, EMPRESS HE ORDERS FOR HER DEATH TO SECURE HER SON LIU BIAN'S THRONE AS THE NEXT EMPEROR OF HAN.

GAO SHUN:
ONE OF LU BU'S TRUSTED GENERALS. HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH HIS LORD IN VOLUME 14.

GUO SI:
A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND LI JUE TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED UNTIL THE EMPEROR RUNS TO CAO CAO FOR PROTECTION.

HUANG GAI:
LOYAL GENERAL OF WU, WHOSE FAMILY HAS SERVED THE SUN FAMILY FOR THREE GENERATIONS.

HE JIN:
OLDER BROTHER OF EMPRESS HE. ORIGINALLY A SIMPLE BUTCHER, HE BECAME A GENERAL WHEN HIS YOUNGER SISTER BECAME EMPEROR LING'S CONSORT. IN VOLUME 3, HE ATTEMPTS TO ELIMINATE THE TEN ATTENDANTS, ONLY TO BE DISSUADED FROM DOING SO BY HIS YOUNGER SISTER. HE IS LATER KILLED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

HOU CHENG:
ONE OF LU BU'S GENERALS. IN VOLUME 14, HE, ALONG WITH GENERALS WEI XU AND SONG XIAN, BETRAYS LU BU AND DEFECTS TO CAO CAO'S SIDE.

HUA XIONG:
FAMED GENERAL SERVING UNDER DONG ZHUO. IN VOLUME 5, HE DEFEATS SUN JIAN'S ARMY BUT IS LATER KILLED BY GUAN YU.

JI PING:
IMPERIAL PHYSICIAN OF HAN WHO, WITH DONG CHENG, PLOTS TO POISON CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 17, CAO CAO DISCOVERS THEIR PLOT AND EXECUTES HIM.

JIANG GAN:
CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF ZHOU YU AND NOW AN ADVISOR TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 25, HE FAILS TO PERSUADE ZHOU YU TO DEFECT TO CAO CAO, AND INADVERTANTLY HELPS ZHOU YU'S PLOT TO FRAME CAI MAO.

JIANG QIN:
GENERAL OF WU. FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH ZHOU TAI, BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR SUN CE'S FATHER, SUN JIAN.

LADY FUYOU:
FICTIONAL CHARACTER CREATED BY MITSUTERU YOKOYAMA AND LIU BEI'S FIRST LOVE. ZHANG FEI FORMERLY SERVED HER FAMILY, WHO WERE MASSCRED BY THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELS.

LADY MI:
LIU BEI'S FIRST WIFE.

LADY SUN:
SUN QUAN'S YOUNGER SISTER AND LIU BEI'S WIFE AS OF VOLUME 29. SHE IS QUITE FOND OF WEAPONS AND MARTIAL ARTS TO THE POINT THAT SHE HAS HER ATTENDANT LADIES DRESSED IN FULL ARMOUR. HER REAL NAME IS NOT KNOWN BUT SHE IS ALSO KNOWN AS SUN REN, SUN RENXIAN, SUN SHANGXIAN, AND SUN AN.

LI JUE:
A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND GUO SI TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED UNTIL THE EMPEROR RUNS TO CAO CAO FOR PROTECTION.

LI DIAN:
SCHOLARLY GENERAL UNDER THE SERVICE OF CAO CAO.

LIU BIAN:
THE SON OF EMPRESS HE AND BRIEFLY THE EMPEROR OF HAN AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, EMPEROR LING. IN VOLUME 4, HE WAS DEPOSED BY DONG ZHUO AND LATER KILLED ALONG WITH HIS MOTHER BY LI RU.

LIU FENG:
LIU BEI'S ADOPTED SON. ORIGINALLY THE NEPHEW OF LIU MI, HE WAS ADOPTED BY LIU BEI WHO TOOK A LIKING TO HIM IN VOLUME 21.

LU ZHI:
LIU BEI'S FORMER TEACHER AND THE PALACE COMMANDER WHO WAS PLACED IN CHARGE OF LEADING THE HAN ARMY AGAINST THE YELLOW TURBANS. HE WAS LATER DEMOTED FOR FAILING TO BRIBE ONE OF THE IMPERIAL MESSENGERS.

LIU QI:
ELDEST SON OF LIU BIAO AND THE OLDER BROTHER OF LIU CONG.

MA LIANG:
ONE OF LIU BEI'S ADVISORS. FOURTH YOUNGEST OF THE FIVE MA BROTHERS, AND IS NOTED FOR HIS INTELLECT AND WHITE EYEBROWS.

MI ZHU:
ONE OF LIU BEI'S ADVISORS.

SUN QIAN:
ADVISOR/EMISSARY SERVING LIU BEI. (HIS ROLE IS MUCH SMALLER IN SANGOKUSHI COMPARED TO THE ORIGINAL NOVEL.)

YU JIN:
GENERAL SERVING CAO CAO. (IN RECORDS OF THE THRE KINGDOMS, WRITTEN BY CHEN SHOU, YU JIN IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE FIVE TOP GENERALS FOR WEI.)

ZHANG BAO:
ZHANG JIAO'S YOUNGER BROTHER AND THE YELLOW TURBAN'S GENERAL OF THE LAND. HE WAS KILLED BY LIU BEI IN VOLUME 2.

ZHANG JIAO:
LEADER OF THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION. HE PASSED AWAY DUE TO ILLNESS IN VOLUME 3.

ZHANG ZHAO/ZHANG HONG:
THE TWO GENIUSES OF JIANGDONG, ALSO KNOWN AS THE "TWO ZHANGS." AFTER SUN CE'S ADMANT INSISTENCE, THEY DECIDE TO SERVE HIM AND HELP HIS CAMPAIGN TO CONQUER JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG.

ZHOU TAI:
GENERAL OF WU. FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH JIANG QIN BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN.

SANGOKUSHI (ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS)

三国志

VOLUME 31
MA CHAO'S RETALIATION

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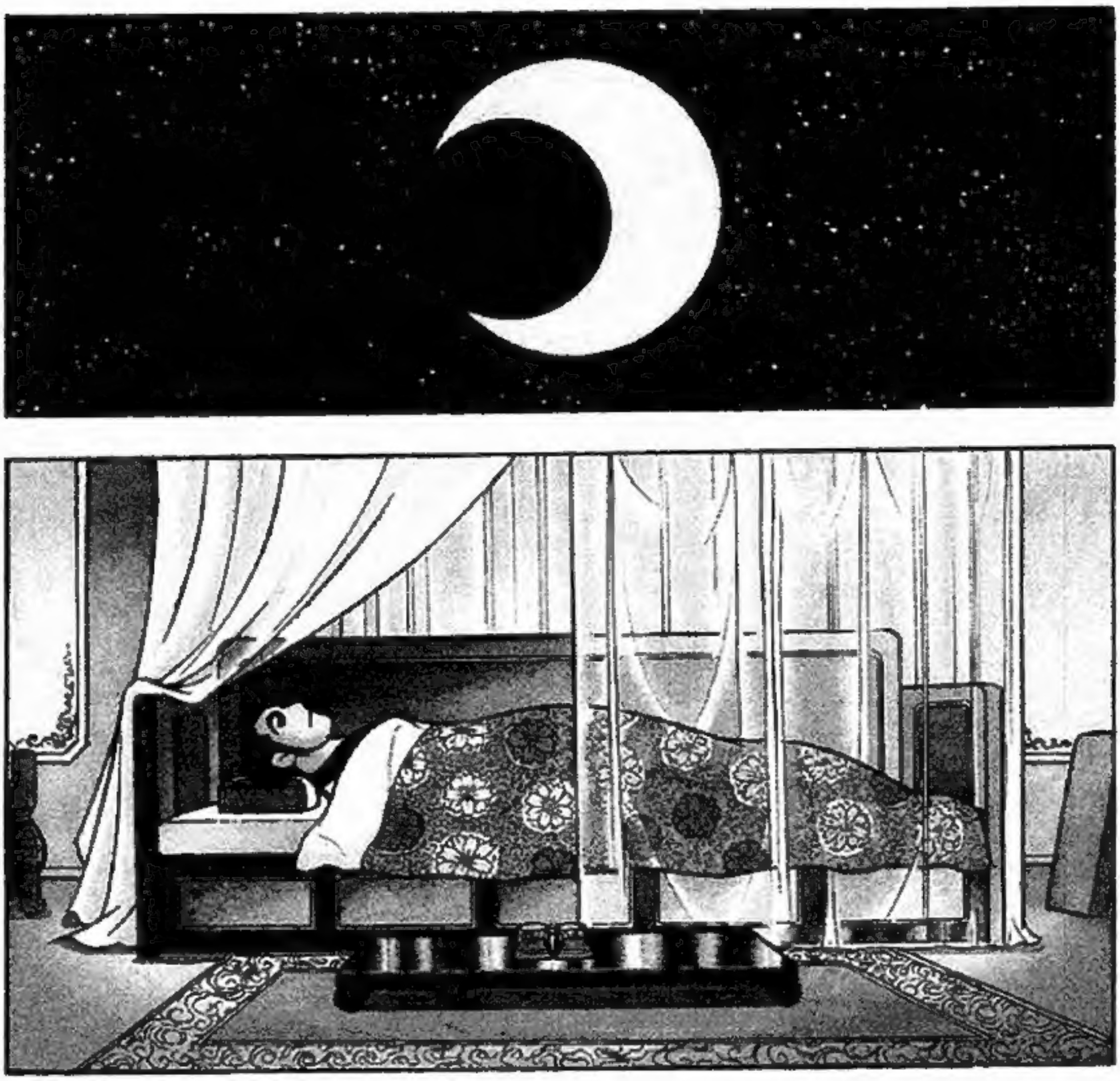
（『月刊少年ガンガン』掲載）

CONQUEST OF WU



!?

HM...?

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A DREAM, WAS IT...

THE QUESTION IS, DOES IT PORTEND GOOD FORTUNE OR ILL OMENS...?

YES, BUT I MUST REMIND YOU THAT MA TENG'S ELDEST SON, MA CHAO IS STILL ALIVE.

HAHA, WITH XILIANG'S MA TENG AND HIS SONS XIU AND TIE EXECTUED, MY WU CONQUEST CAN FINALLY PROCEED PEACEFULLY.

NOT ONLY THAT, I'VE ALREADY TAKEN ACTION.

HAHA, BUT WHAT CAN THAT MA CHAO ACCOMPLISH BY HIMSELF?

AHH, I SEE. EXCELLENTLY HANDLED, CHANCELLOR.

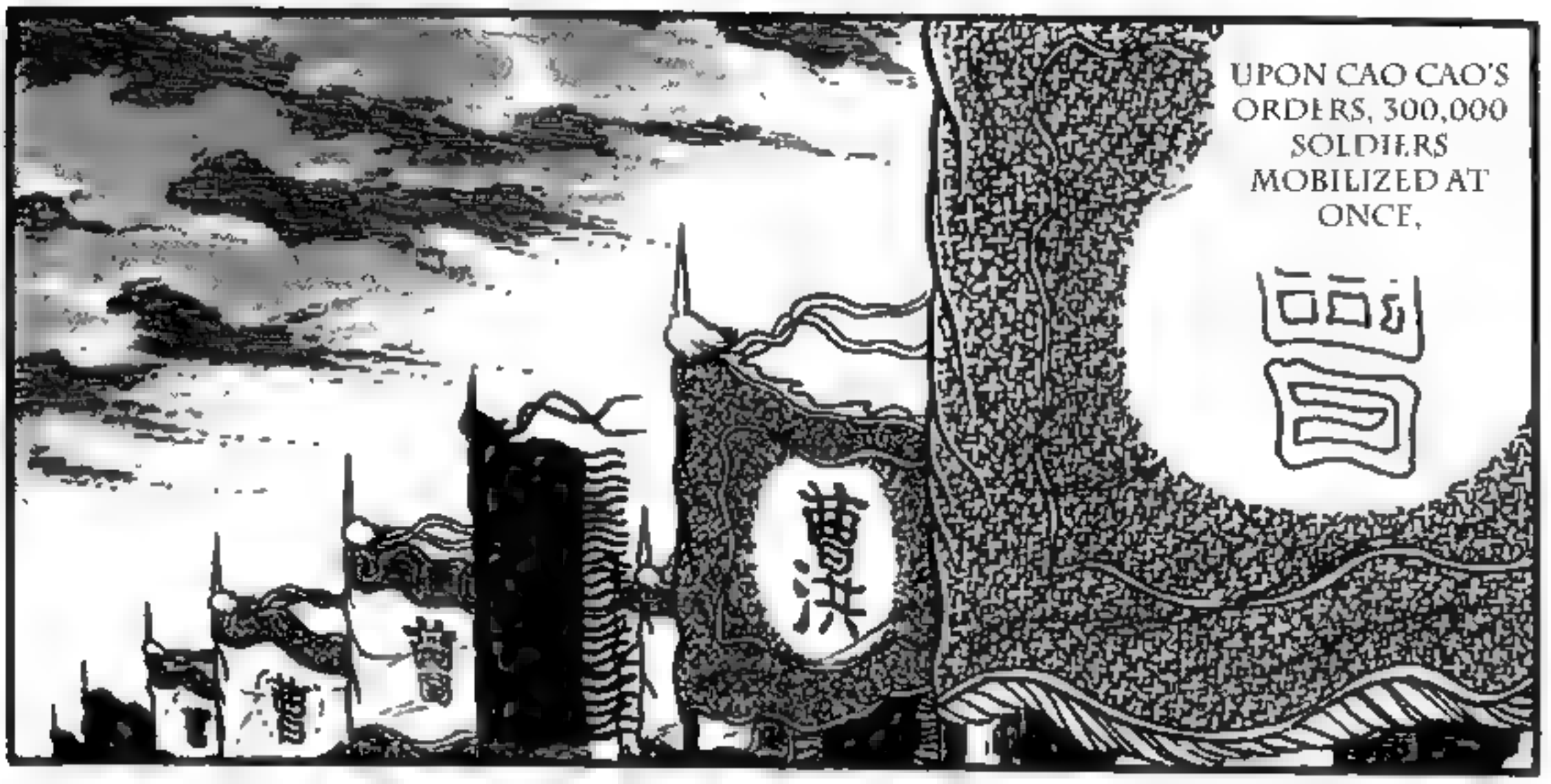
IN WHICH I PROMISED TO APPOINT HIM AS THE NEW GOVERNOR OF XILIANG IF HE CAPTURES MA CHAO.

TAKEN ACTION?

I'VE SENT A LETTER TO HAN SUI OF XILIANG,

YES, SIR.

NOW THEN, GENTLEMEN, MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR THE WU-CONQUEST CAMPAIGN.


UPON CAO CAO'S ORDERS, 300,000 SOLDIERS MOBILIZED AT ONCE,
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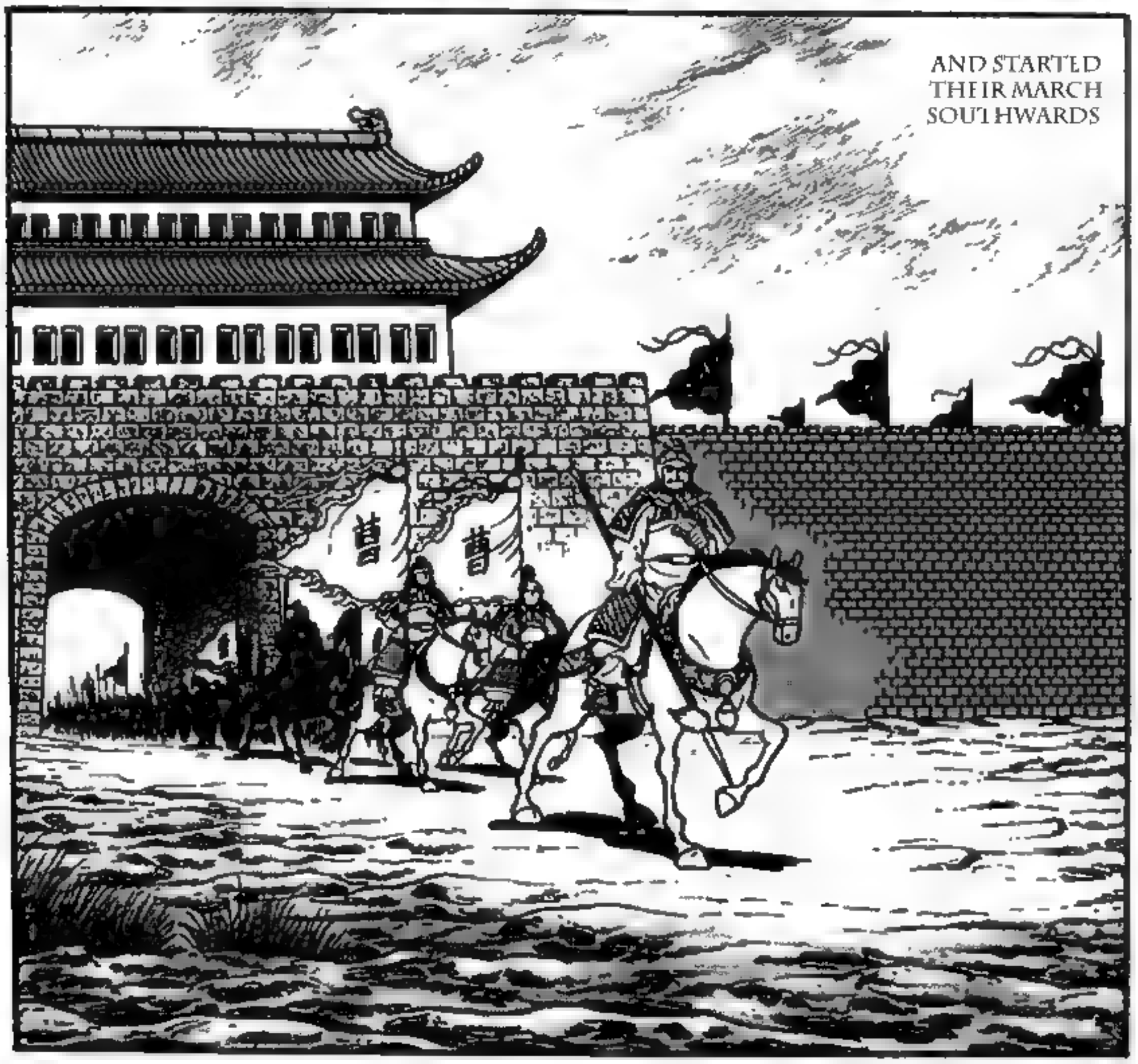

AND STARTED THEIR MARCH SOUTHWARDS
曹
曹

IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE SPIES SENT NEWS OF THIS MOBILIZATION TO WU.
THE BEWILDERED SUN QUAN QUICKLY CALLED FOR AN EMERGENCY MEETING TO PLAN OUT A COURSE OF ACTION.

IF ONLY ZHOU YU WERE STILL ALIVE, HE'D COME UP WITH ANOTHER STUNNING STRATEGY...

AN ARMY OF 300,000 IS NO LAUGHING MATTER. WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

WILL HE REALLY HELP US?

LIU BEI...

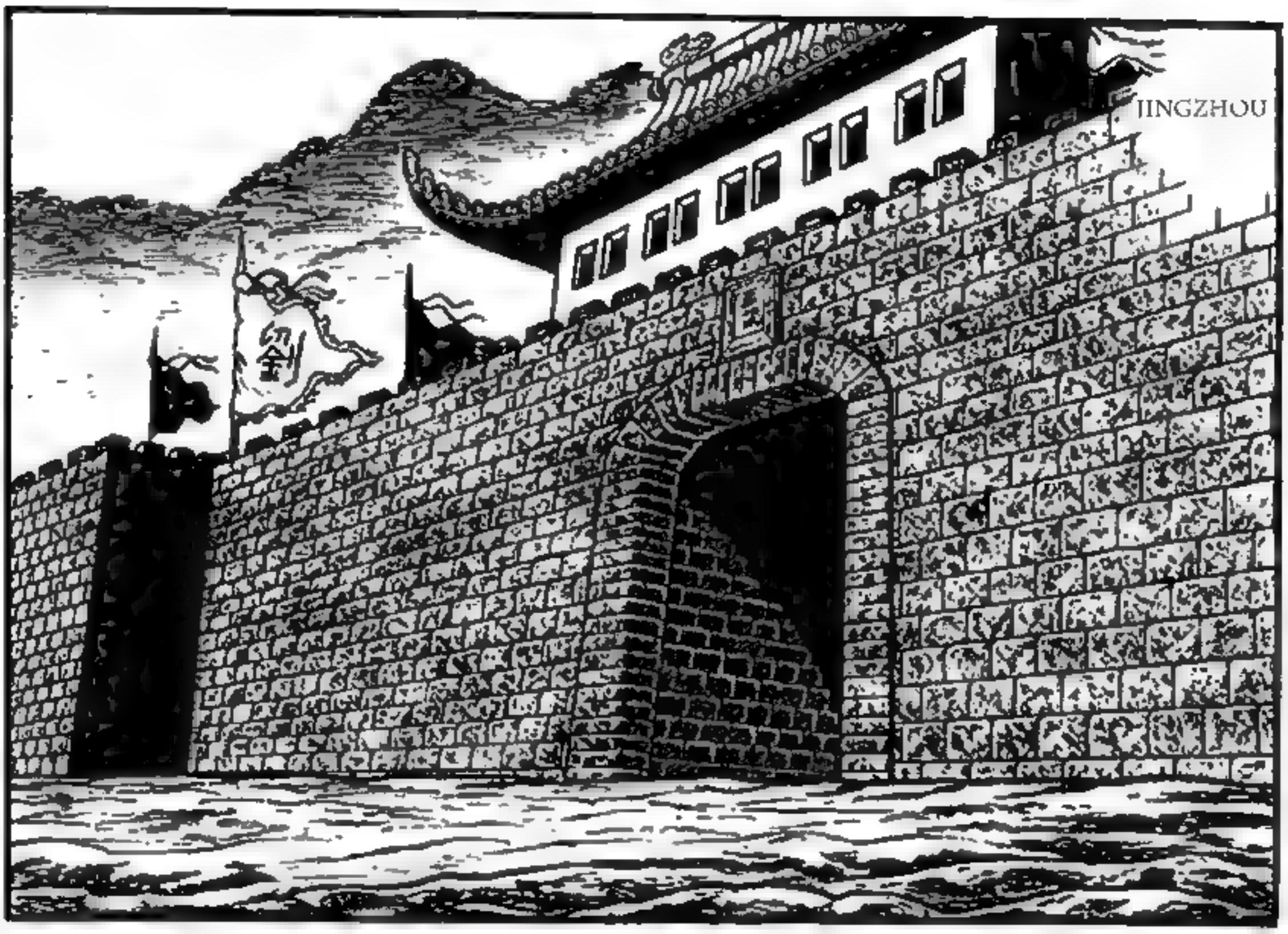
MY LORD, FOR WHAT REASON HAVE YOU MAINTAINED YOUR TIES WITH LIU BEI IF NOT FOR CRISES LIKE THIS?

OF COURSE. HE SHOULD KNOW BEST THAT ONCE WU FALLS, SO SHALL JINGZHOU AND HE.

YES, SIR.

FINE, SEND A MESSENGER AT ONCE.

HMM...


JINGZHOU
剣

AND YOUR REPLY, SIR...?
I SEE. SO CAO CAO HAS FINALLY SET FORTH AGAIN...

SO YOU WILL LEND WU YOUR AID?

REST ASSURED. I ALONE CAN HANDLE A MEASLY ARMY OF 300,000 WITH NO PROBLEM.

THANK YOU, SIR.

OF COURSE. CAO CAO IS A THREAT TO BOTH OF US.

NOT AT ALL.

KONGMING, THOUGH I DON'T DOUBT YOUR ABILITIES, I WONDER IF YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE BOASTED A LITTLE TOO MUCH JUST NOW.

HOW!?

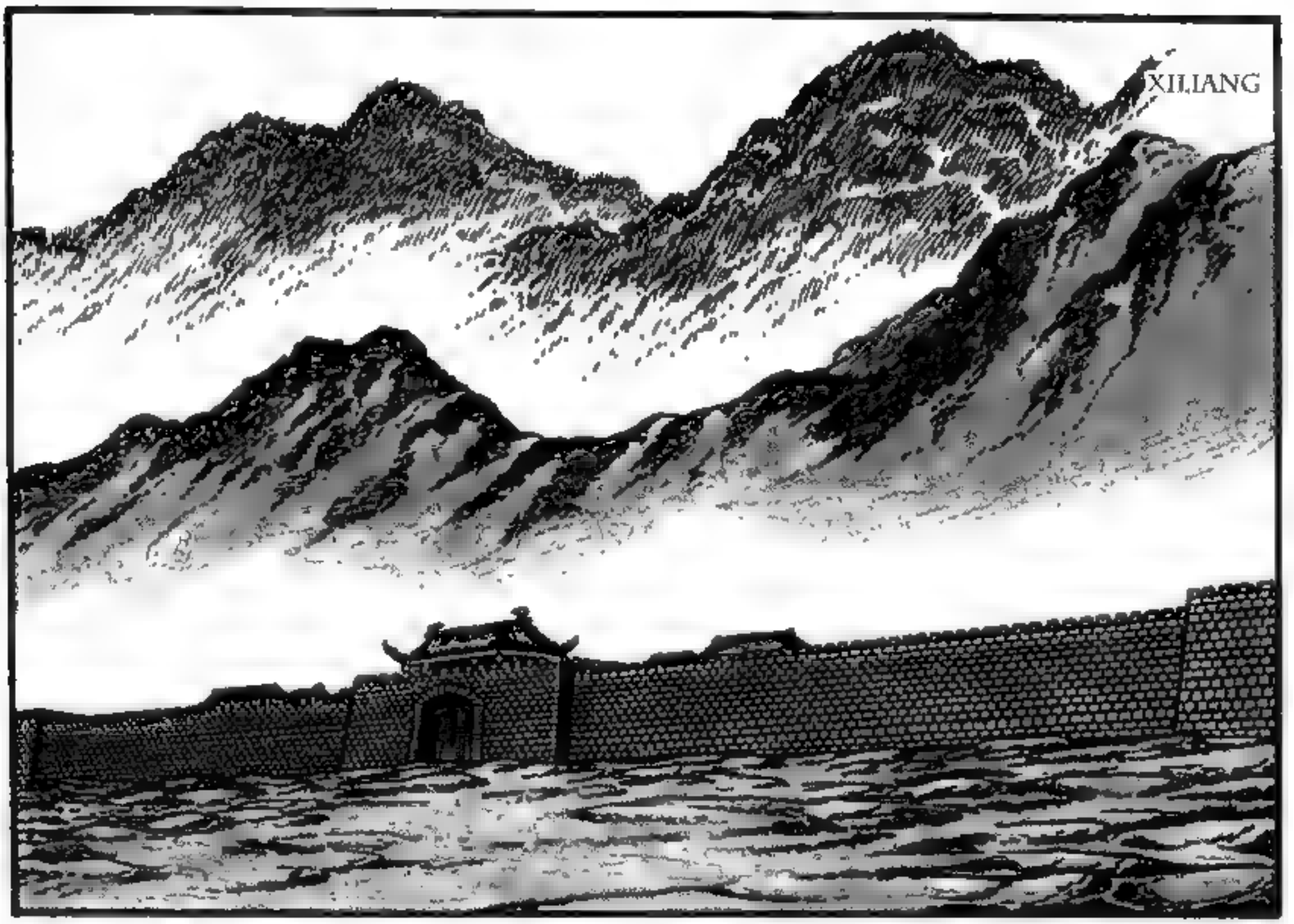
THERE JUST SO HAPPENS TO BE A WAY TO STOP CAO CAO WITHOUT US OR EVEN WU GETTING INVOLVED.

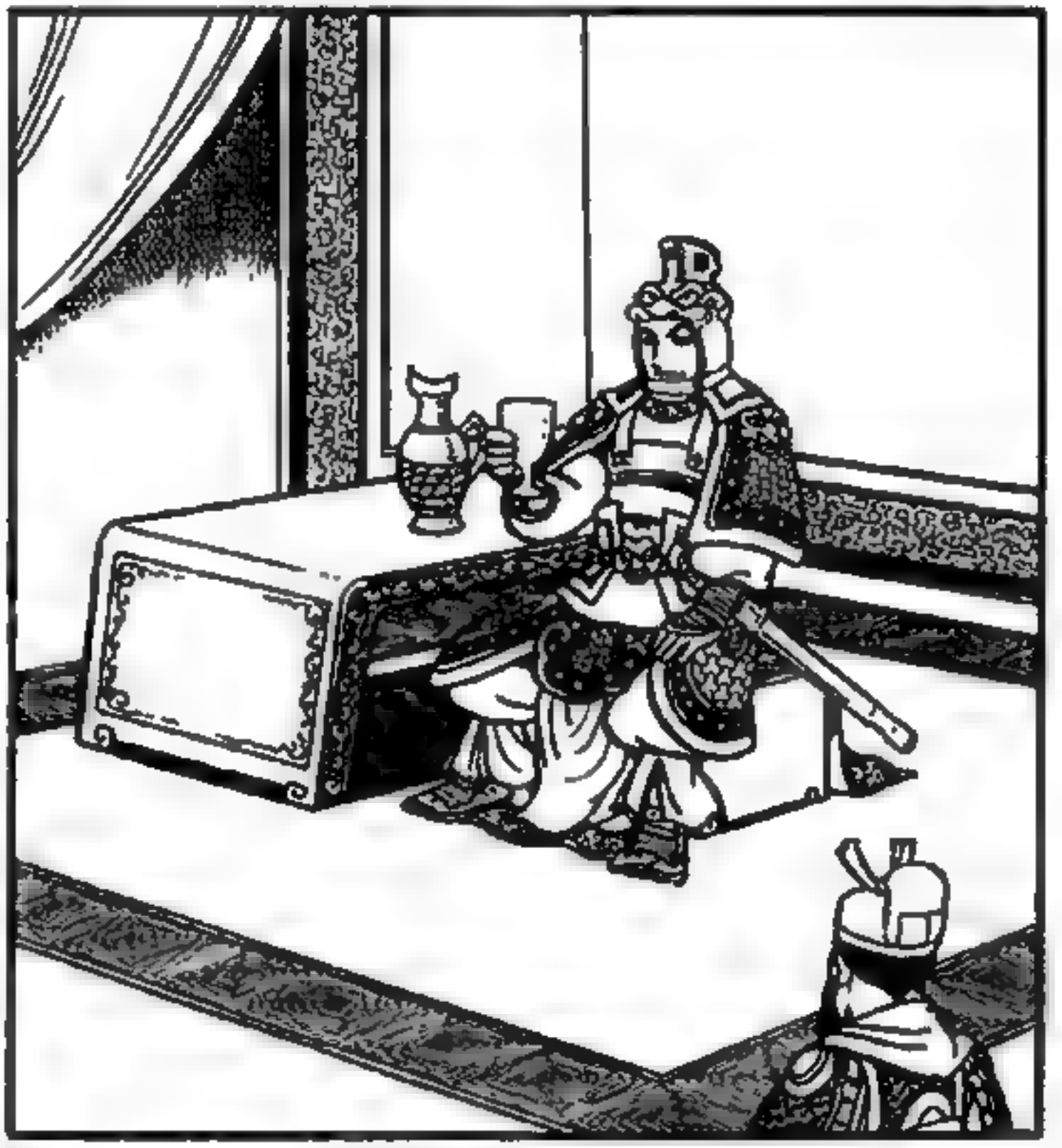
I'M SURE THE FLAMES OF REVENGE WILL SPUR MA CHAO INTO ACTION AT ONCE.

AS YOU'VE RECENTLY HEARD, MA TENG OF XILIANG WAS RECENTLY CAUGHT AND EXECUTED IN XUCHANG. HOWEVER, HIS ELDEST SON MA CHAO IS STILL ALIVE. THE KEY IS TO HAVE HIM FIGHT IN OUR STEAD.

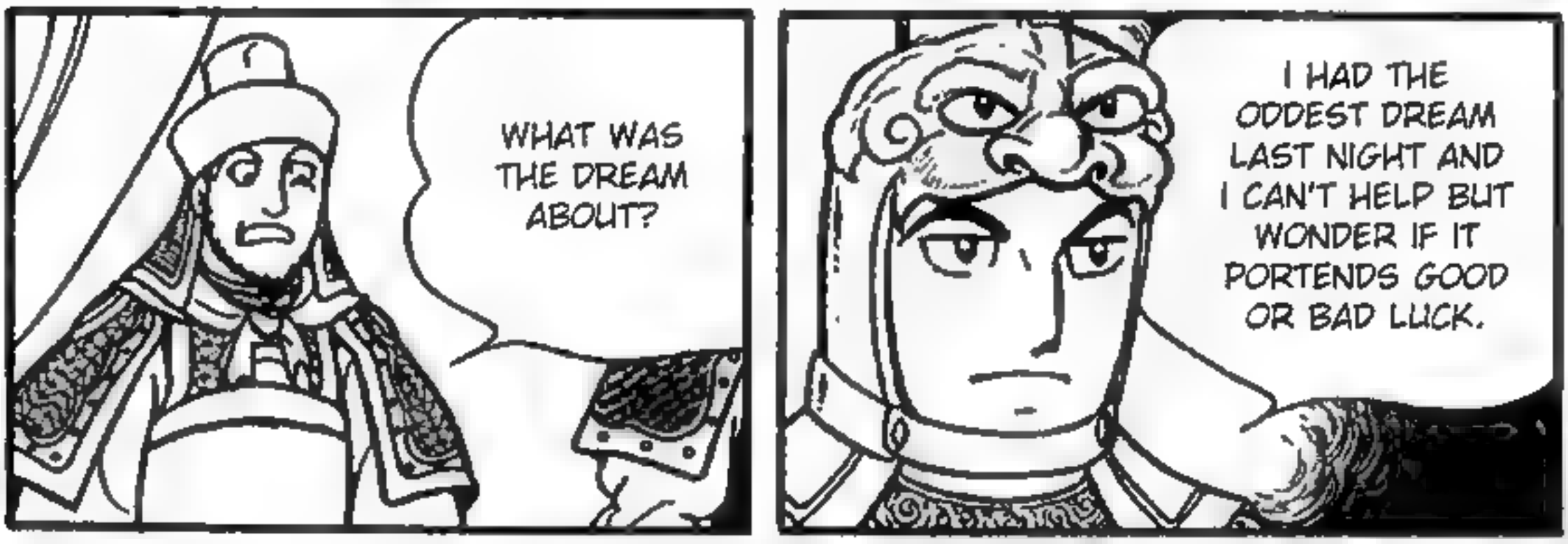
ALRIGHT.

PLEASE SEND A MESSENGER TO XILIANG AT ONCE, MY LORD.


XILIANG



YOU SEEM TROUBLED, SIR. MAY I ASK IF SOMETHING IS THE MATTER?


WHAT WAS THE DREAM ABOUT?
I HAD THE ODDEST DREAM LAST NIGHT AND I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER IF IT PORTENDS GOOD OR BAD LUCK.

OHH!
AN ODD DREAM, INDEED.
I WAS LYING ON SNOWY PLAINS WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN, SEVERAL TIGERS APPEARED AND POUNCED AT ME.

WHAT!

I BELIEVE THAT IS AN EXTREMELY ILL OMEN.

COULD SOMETHING HAVE HAPPENED TO FATHER...?

IS THAT TRUE, PANG DE!?

COMING ACROSS TIGERS IN THE SNOW HAS BEEN CONSIDERED UNLUCKY FOR MANY, MANY YEARS, SIR.

I PRAY NOTHING BAD HAS HAPPENED...

THEN AGAIN... DREAMS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO SHOW THE OPPOSITE. PLEASE DO NOT WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT IT.

WHAT!?

YOUR COUSIN MA DAI HAS JUST RETURNED BATTERED AND BRUISED ALL OVER!

SIR!

YOUR FATHER AND HIS SOLDIERS WERE ALL CAUGHT AND IGNOMINIOUSLY KILLED BY CAO CAO'S WICKED BLADE. I WAS ONLY ABLE TO ESCAPE BY DISGUISING AS A BEGGAR.

IT PAINS ME TO SAY THIS BUT...

MA DAI! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU!?

Y-YES...

M-MY BROTHERS, TOO...?

MY FATHER AND BROTHERS... ALL SLAUGHTERED...

XIU!

TIE!

FATHER!

IT CAN'T BE!

IT CAN'T!

NOO...

SIR!

WHAT IS IT?

SEND HIM THROUGH

JINGZHOU?

A MESSENGER FROM JINGZHOU WISHES TO MEET WITH YOU, SIR.

GIVE IT HERE.

MY LORD, LIU BEI, HAS ASKED ME TO DELIVER YOU THIS LETTER.

I, LIU BEI, WAS A FRIEND OF YOUR FATHER AND TOGETHER WE SIGNED AN OATH IN BLOOD TO RESTORE THE HAN DYNASTY BY ELIMINATING ITS CURRENT TYRANNICAL CHANCELLOR. CAO CAO, AS YOU KNOW, WAS YOUR FATHER'S SWORN ENEMY AND HE IS A MENACE TO THE-

THOUGH I APPRECIATE HIS OFFER TO HELP, I PLAN TO TAKE ON CAO CAO ALONE.

YES, SIR.

I SEE... SO HE PROMISES TO ATTACK IF I DO AS WELL?

YES, SIR.

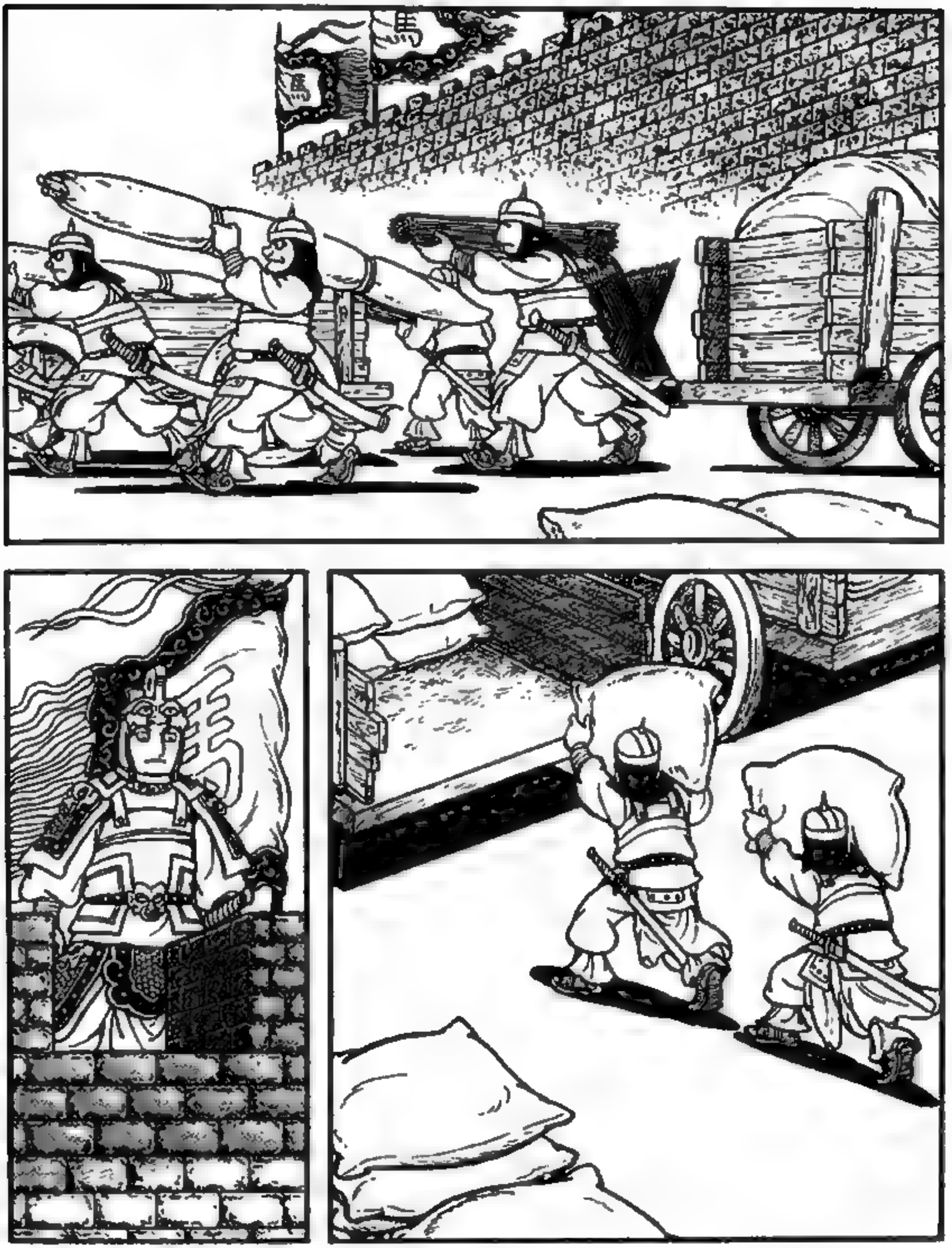
FOR THE PRIDE AND HONOUR OF THE MA CLAN, I SHALL AVENGE THE DEATHS OF MY FATHER AND BROTHERS BY MYSELF. REPORT THAT BACK TO LIU BEI.

YES, SIR!

YES, SIR!

MEN, PREPARE FOR BATTLE!

XILIANG'S ARMY



SIR!

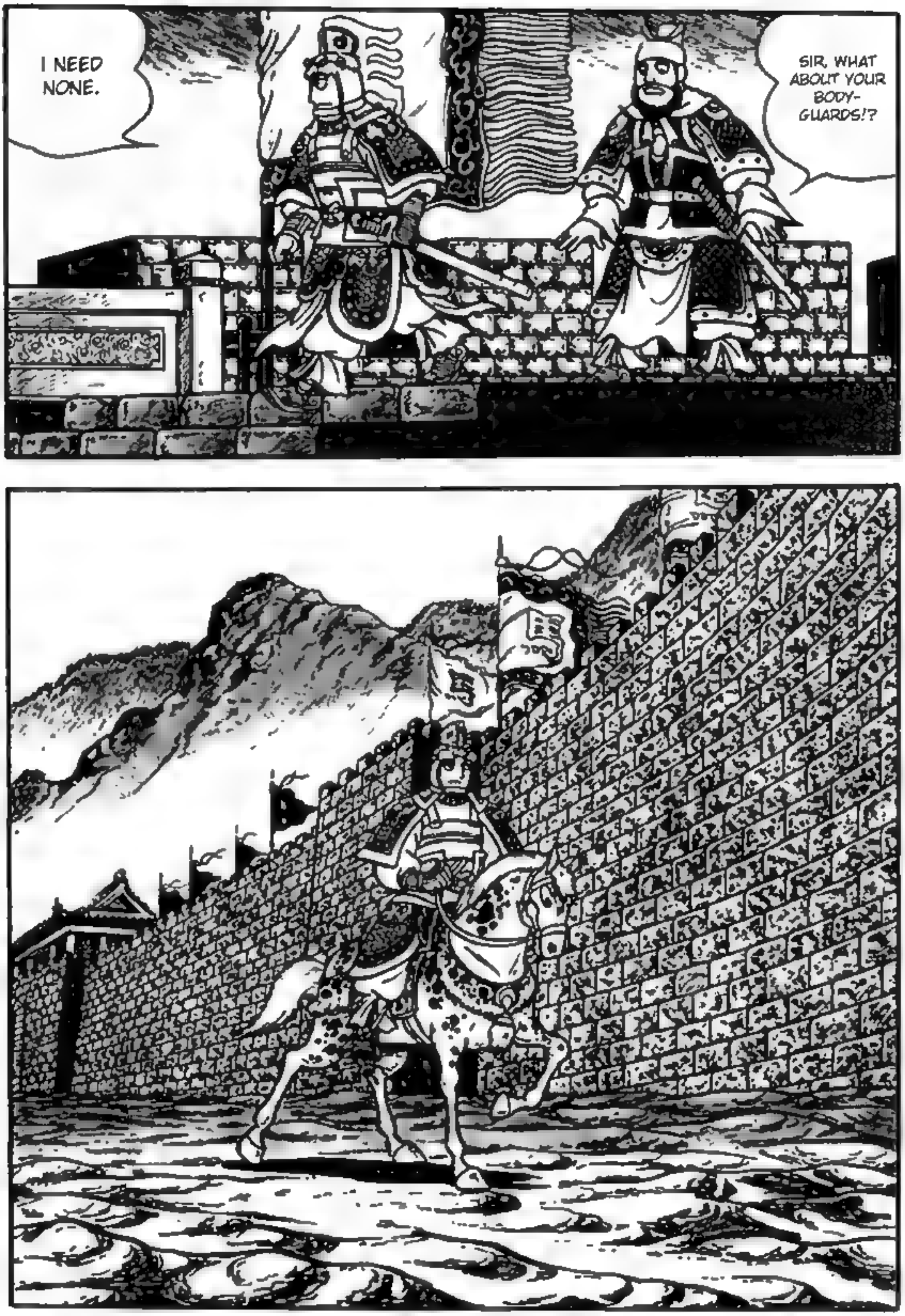
JUST YOU WAIT, CAO CAO. I'LL SHOW YOU THE TERROR OF XILIANG'S ELITE ARMY SOON...

HAN SUI?

HAN SUI WISHES TO SPEAK WITH YOU AT ONCE.

FINE, I'LL GO SEE HIM AT ONCE.

WHAT COULD HE WANT NOW OF ALL TIMES...?


I NEED NONE.
SIR, WHAT ABOUT YOUR BODY-GUARDS!?

HAN SUI'S RESIDENCE

DID YOU NEED TO SEE ME FOR SOME-THING, SIR?

AH, HOW GOOD OF YOU TO COME, MA CHAO.

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, CAO CAO SENT ME THIS LETTER JUST NOW.

DO AS YOU WILL, SIR. I'M PREPARED FOR DEATH AT ANY MOMENT.

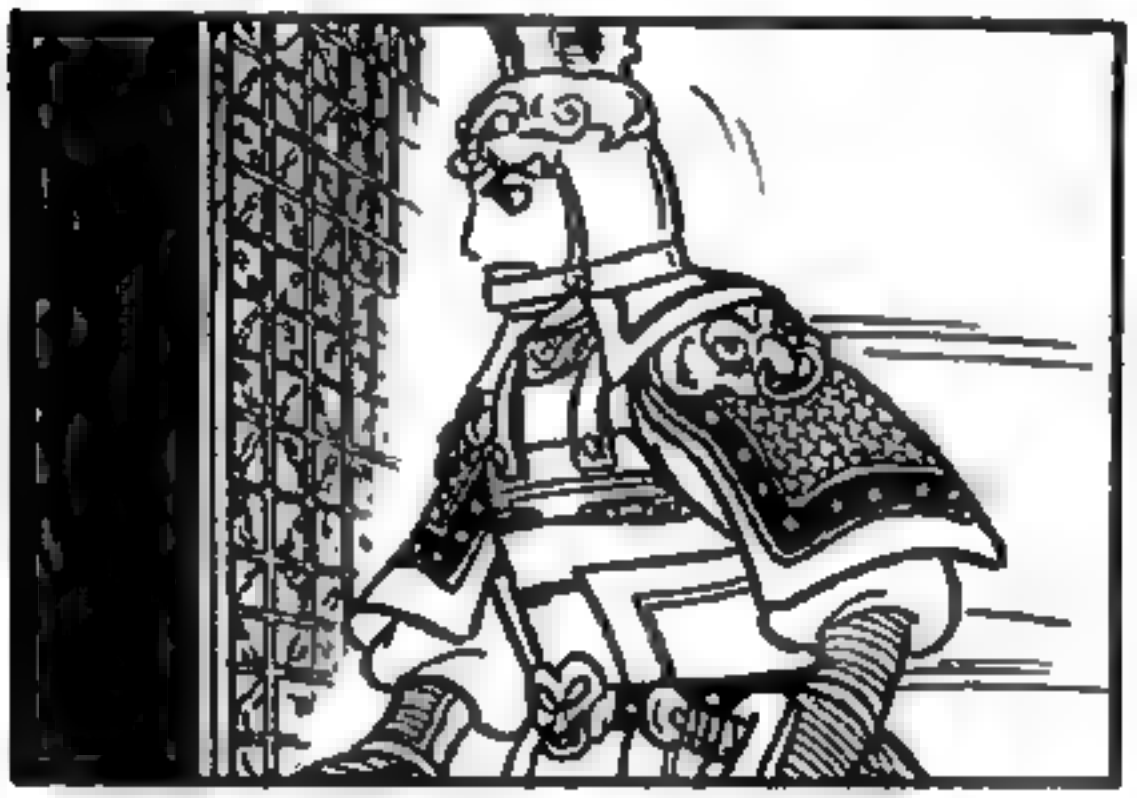
HE SAYS HE'LL APPOINT ME AS THE NEW GOVERNOR OF XILIANG IF I BRING YOU TO XUCHANG.

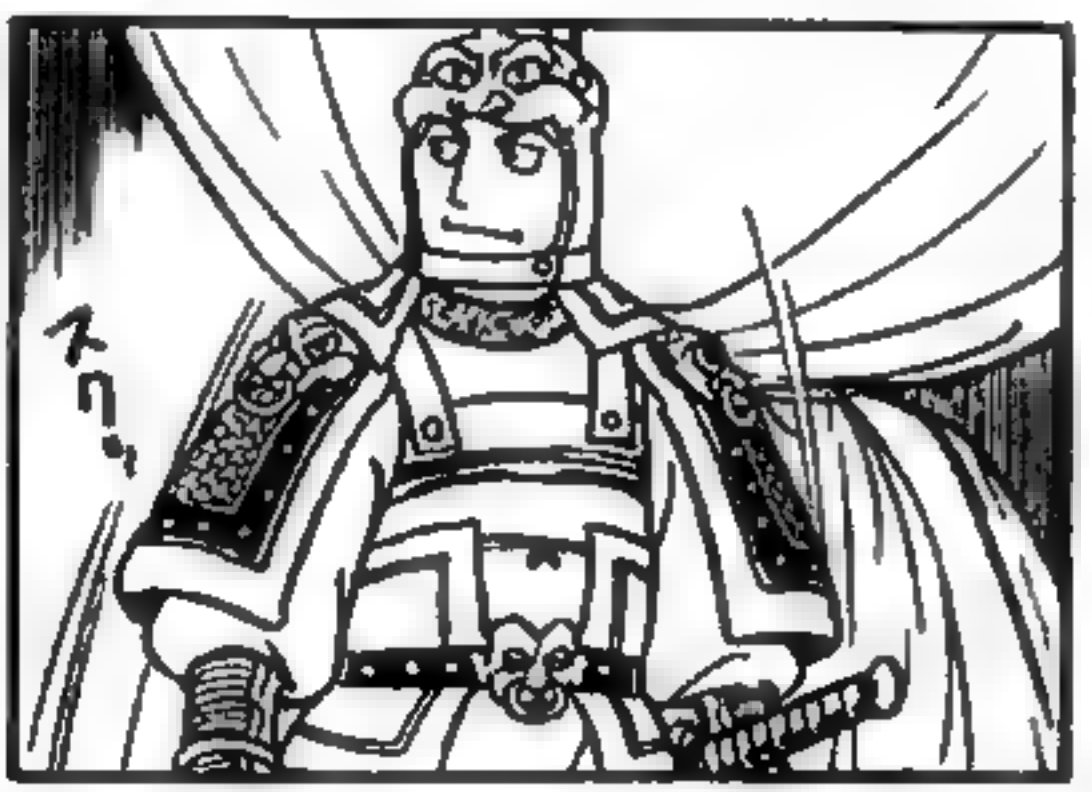
MORE IMPORTANTLY, DO YOU HAVE ANY INTENTION OF AVENGING YOUR FATHER?

DON'T SPOUT SUCH FOOLISHNESS. IF CATCHING YOU WERE MY INTENTIONS, I WOULDN'T HAVE CALLED YOU HERE RIGHT NOW.

PLEASE LET ME SEE CAO CAO'S MESSENGER WHO BROUGHT YOU THIS LETTER.

YES, SIR.
BRING HIM HERE AT ONCE.



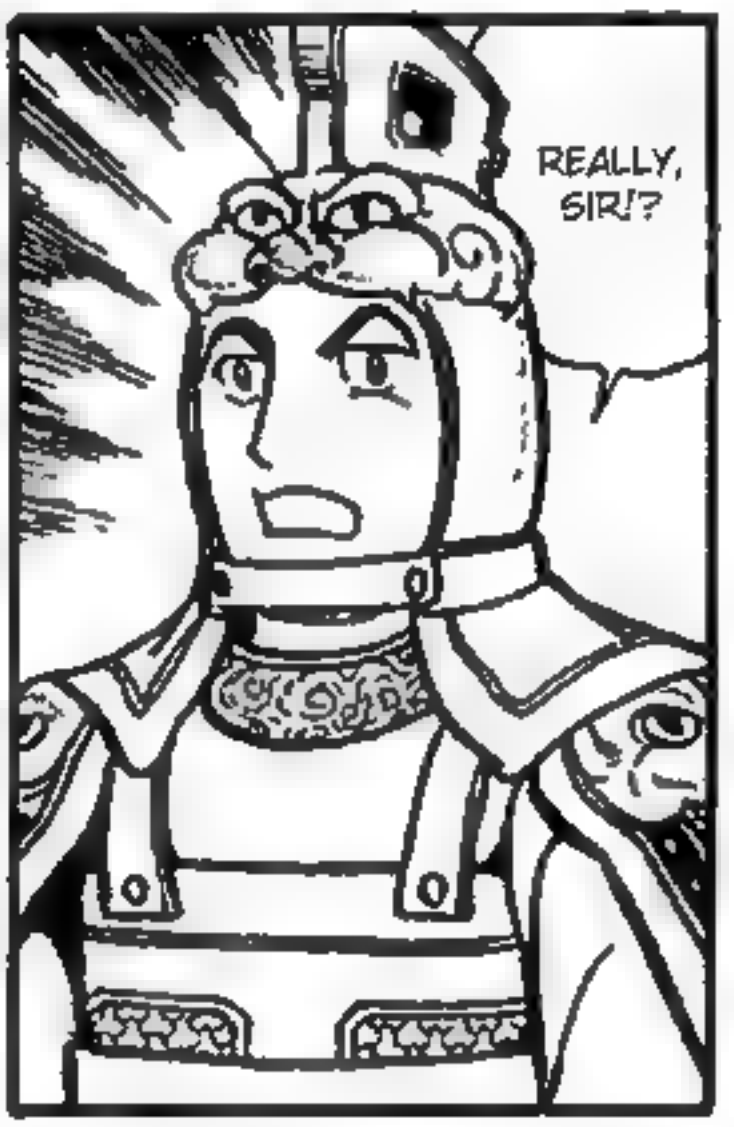


YOUR FATHER AND I SWORE AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD LONG AGO. AS SUCH, IT IS ONLY RIGHT THAT I HELP YOU OUT.

ハハ

I SEE. YOU REALLY ARE MA TENG'S SON.
THESE ARE MY FEELINGS ON THE MATTER.

I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL.
LET US WORK TOGETHER TO BRING CAO CAO TO JUSTICE, MA CHAO.


REALLY, SIR!?

HAVING FORMED AN ALLIANCE,
MA CHAO AND HAN SUI NOW
LED AN ARMY OF 200,000 TO
CHANG'AN TO COMMENCE
THEIR WAR AGAINST CAO CAO

CHANG'AN

YES, SIR.

...

WHAT!? 200,000 XILIANG SOLDIERS ARE HEADED THIS WAY!?

YES, SIR.

SEND A REQUEST FOR REINFORCEMENTS TO THE CHANCELLOR AT ONCE!

FOR THE TIME BEING, WE'LL FACE THEM JUST OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS.

AND BRING ME MY ARMOUR AT ONCE!

HAHA, IT SEEMS ZHONG YAO OF CHANG'AN HAS COME OUT TO GIVE US A PROPER WELCOME.

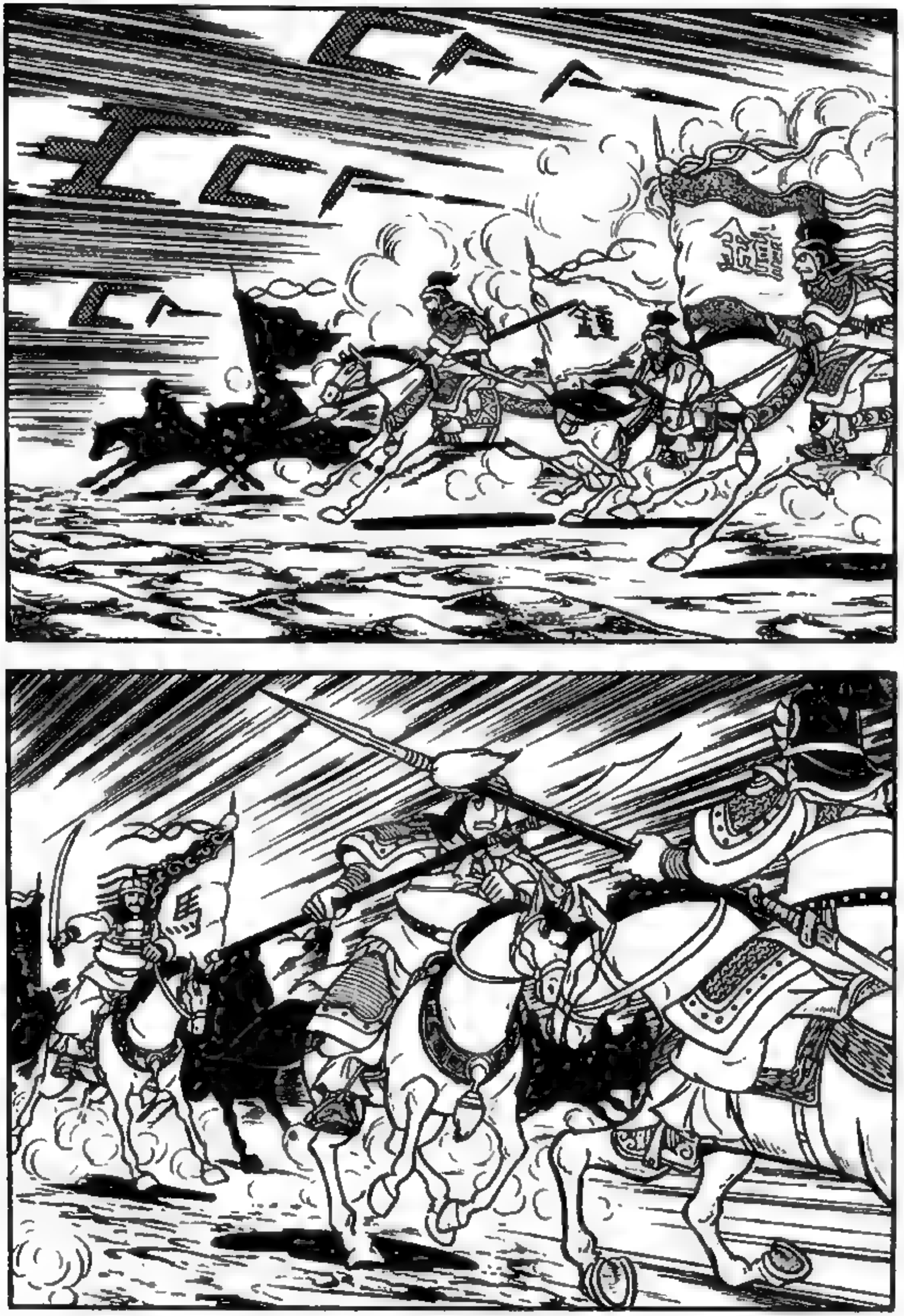
THANK YOU.

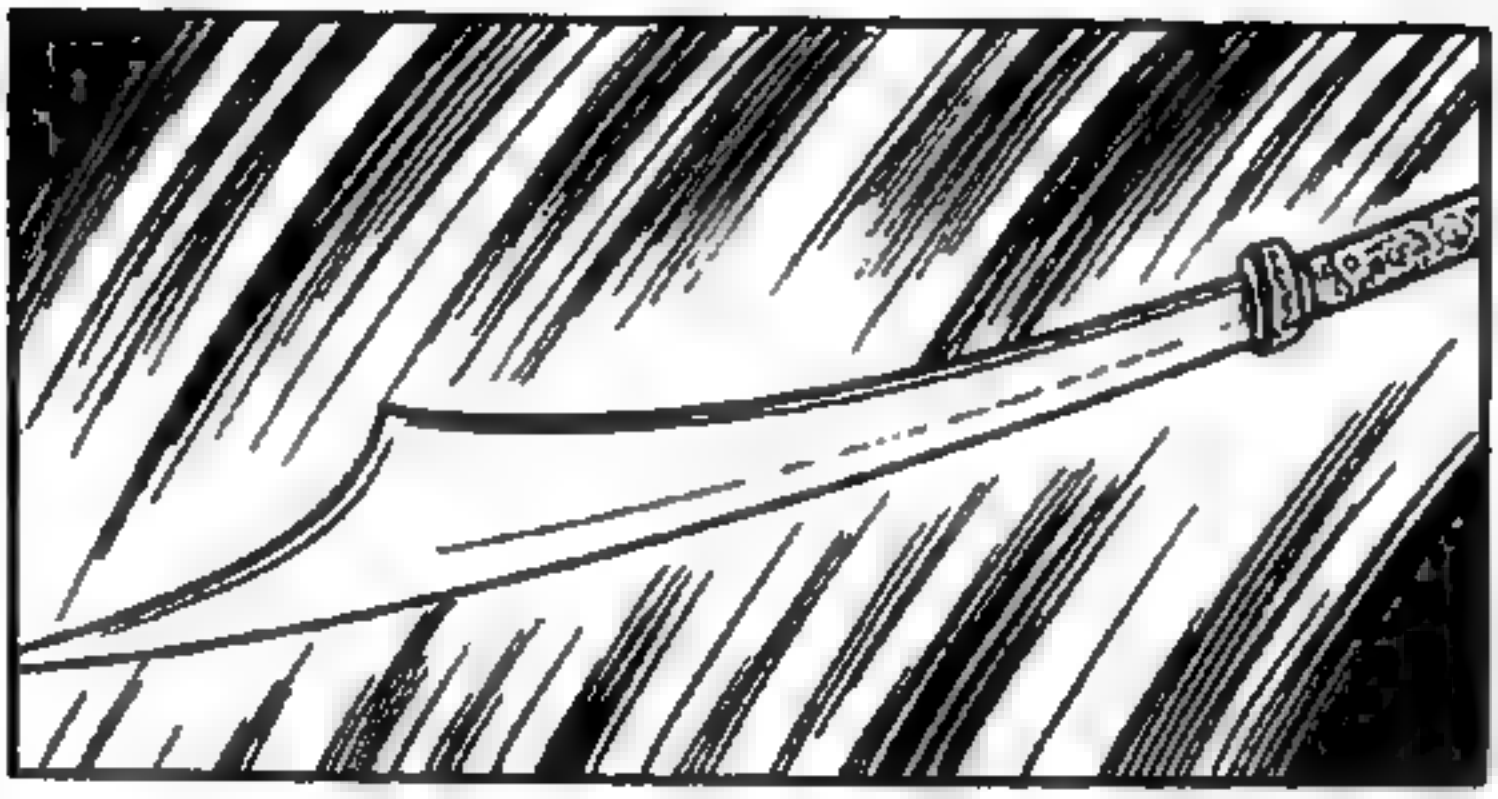
GO AHEAD, MA DAI.

MA CHAO, PLEASE ALLOW ME TO LEAD THE ATTACK.

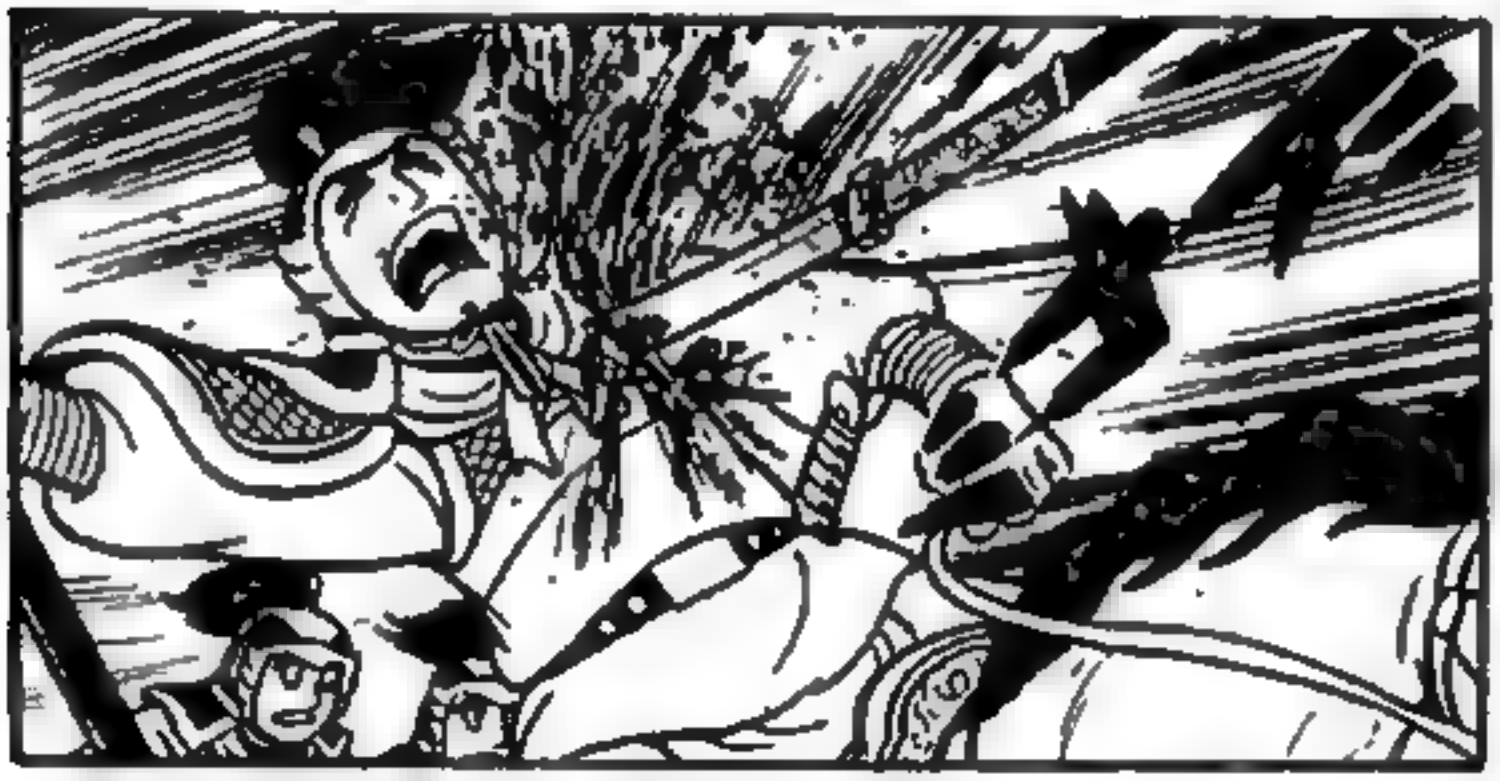
LET US AVENGE OUR FORMER LORD MA TENG'S DEATH!

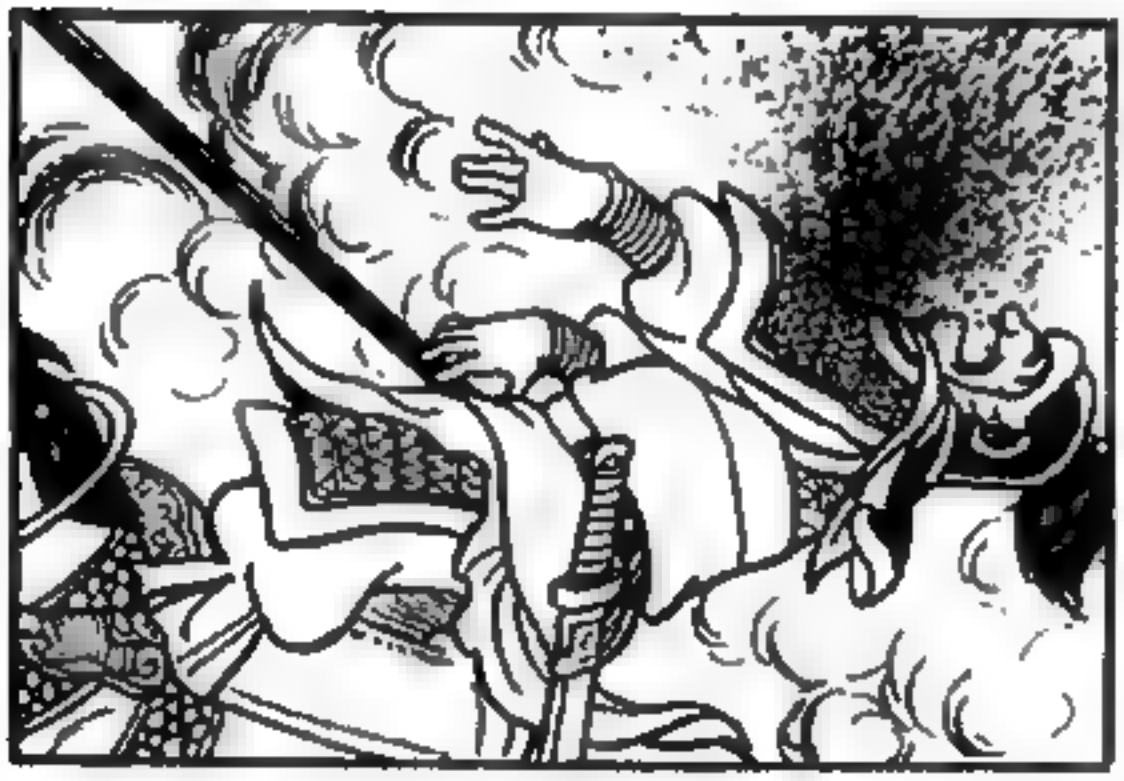
THEY'RE COMING, MEN!

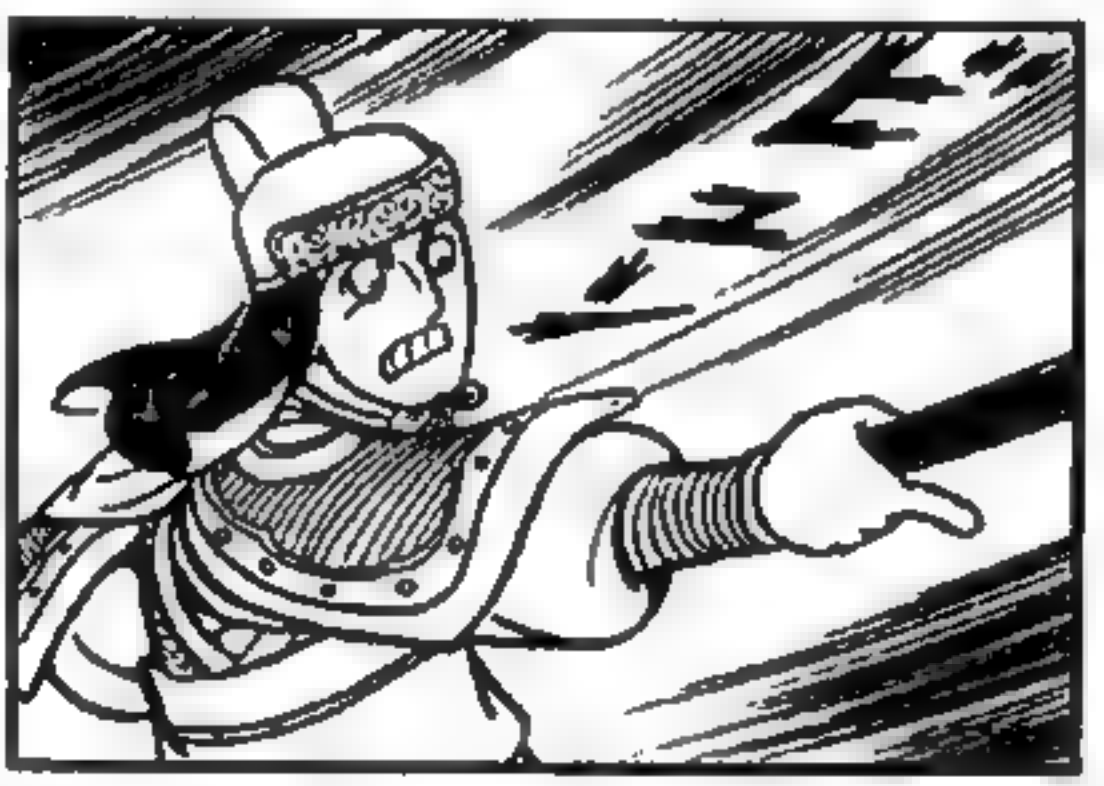


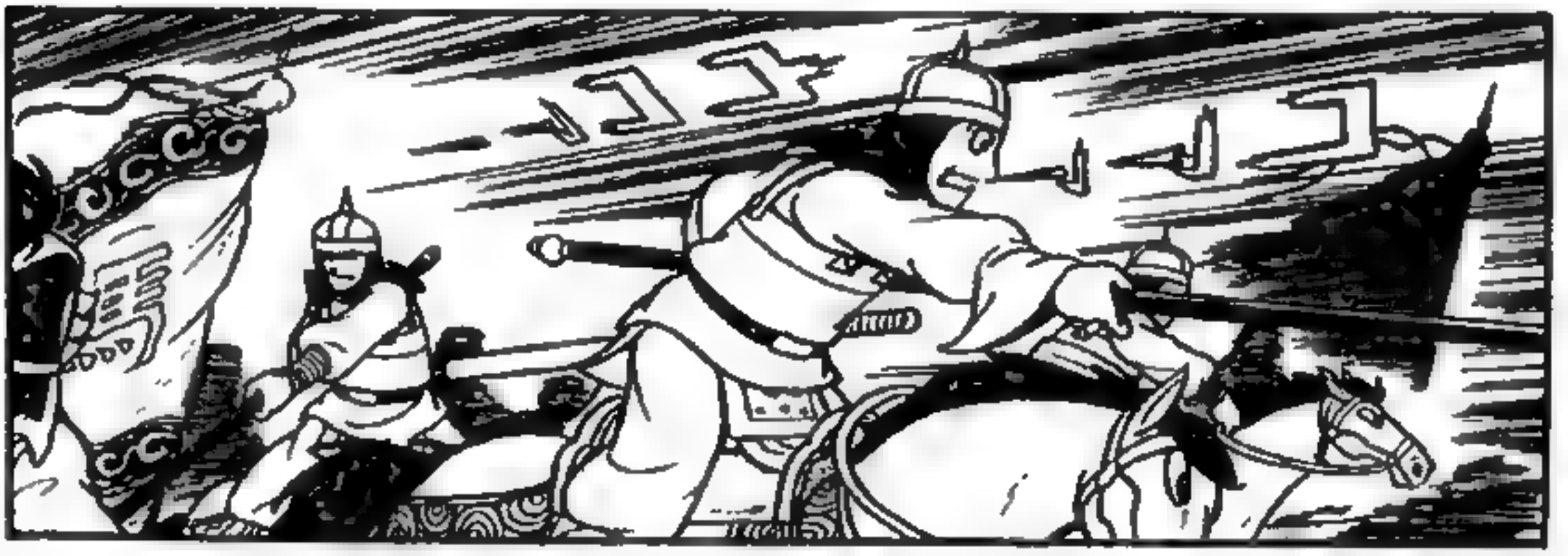


TAKE
THIS!







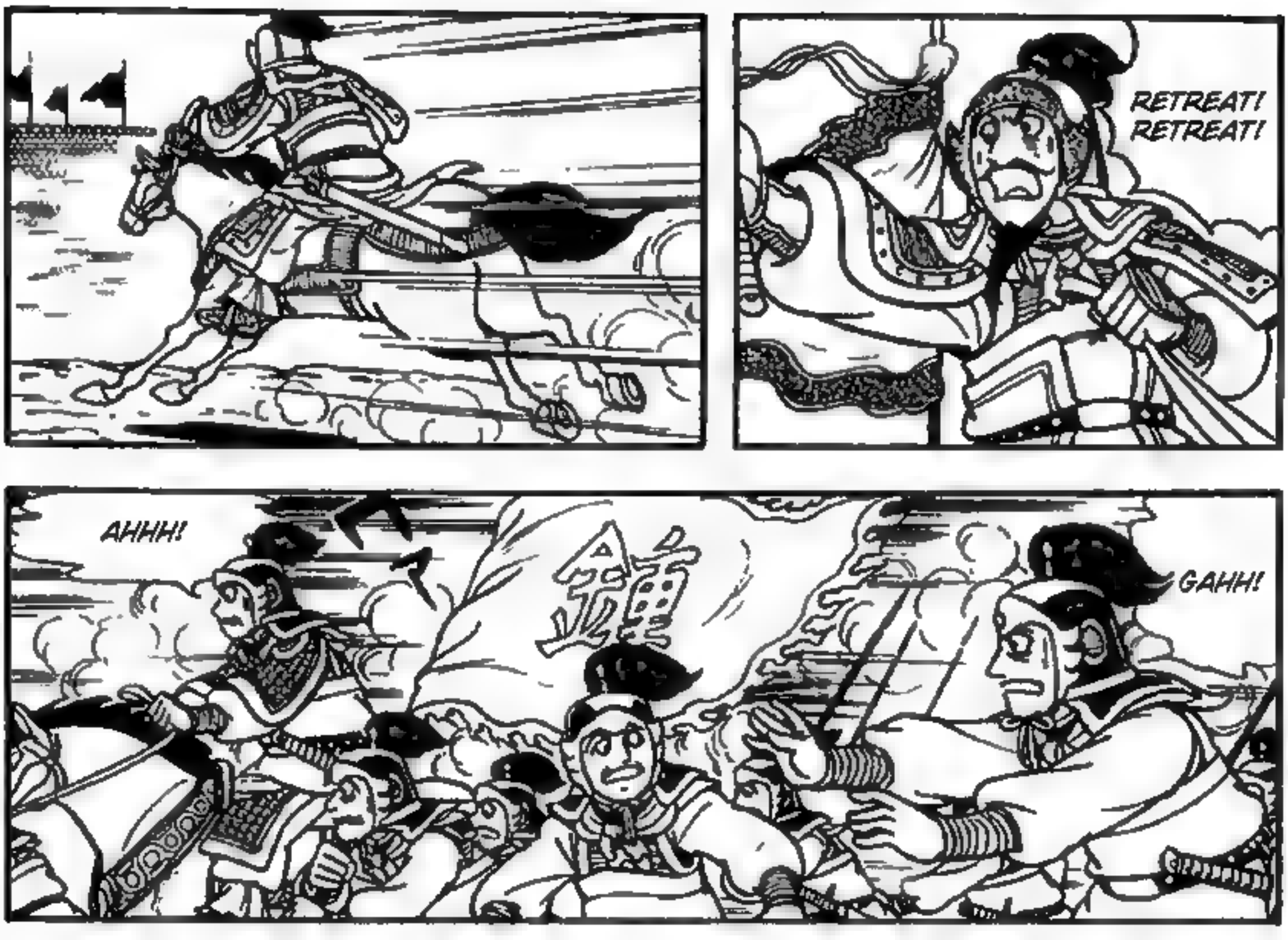


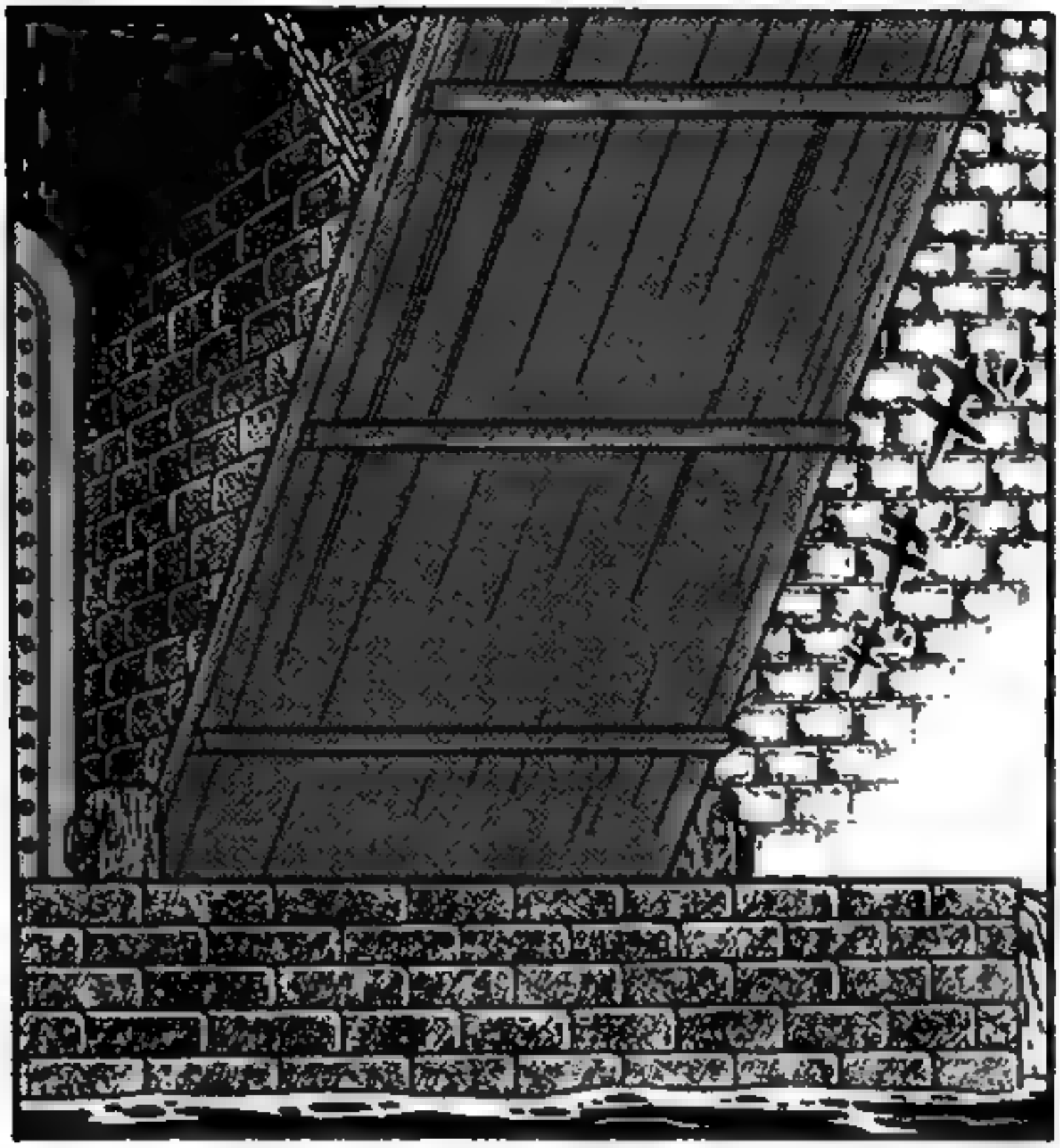
YOU, THERE! YOU MUST BE THE ENEMY GENERAL!

WHAT A FIERCE WARRIOR...

AHH!

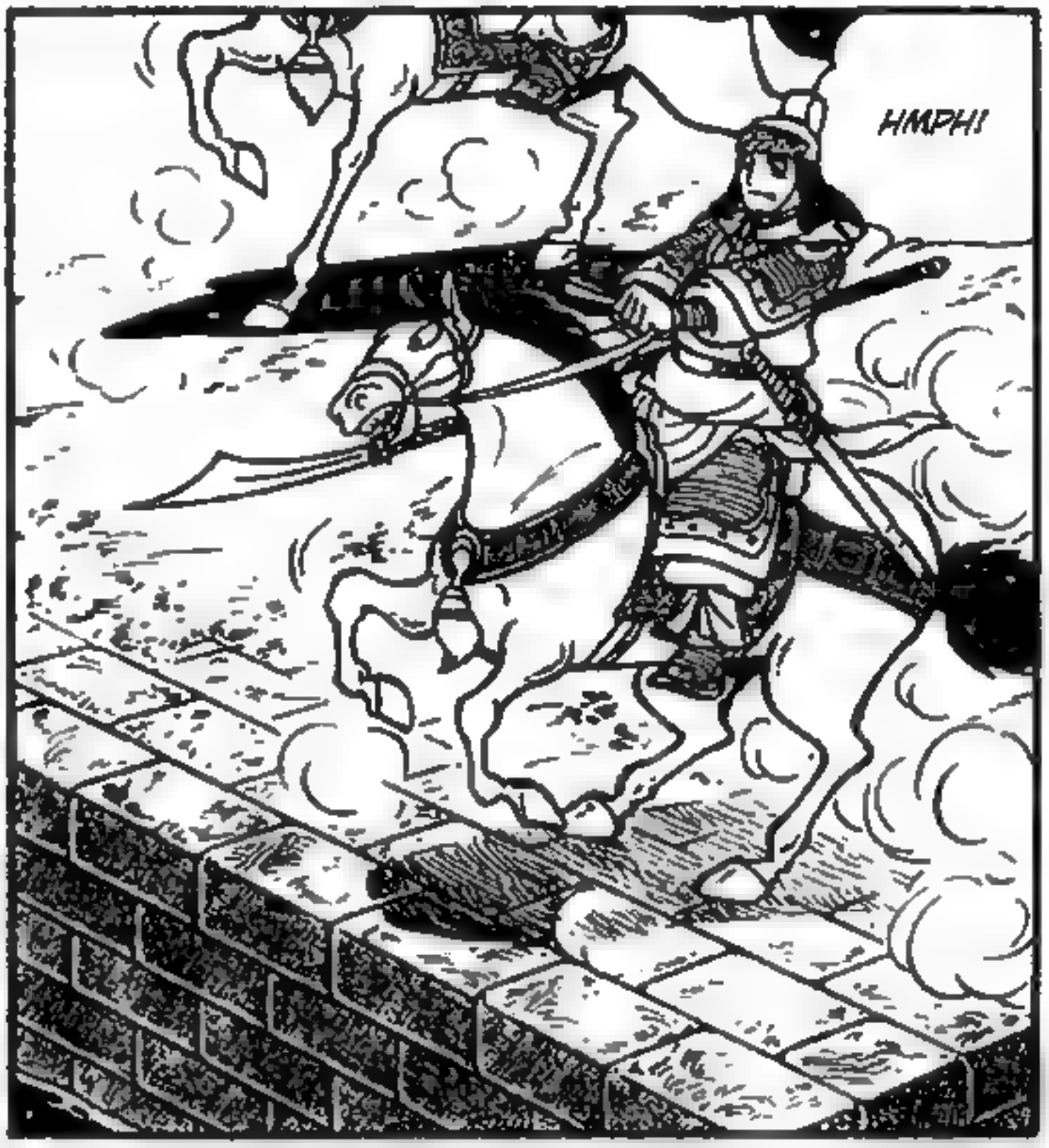
I'M HERE FOR YOUR HEAD!


RETREAT!
RETREAT!
AHHH!
GAHH!



CLOSE THE GATES!

ARCHERS! FIRE AT WILL!


HMPH!

RETREAT BEYOND THE RANGE OF THEIR ARROWS!

WHAT IS IT, PANG DE?

SIR!

HMM, WHAT WOULD BE THE BEST WAY TO ATTACK...

YES, SO WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

AS THE FORMER CAPITAL OF THE WESTERN HAN DYNASTY, CHANG'AN BOASTS THICK WALLS AND A DEEP MOAT. A CONVENTIONAL ATTACK WILL ONLY LEAVE US WITH HEAVY CASUALTIES.

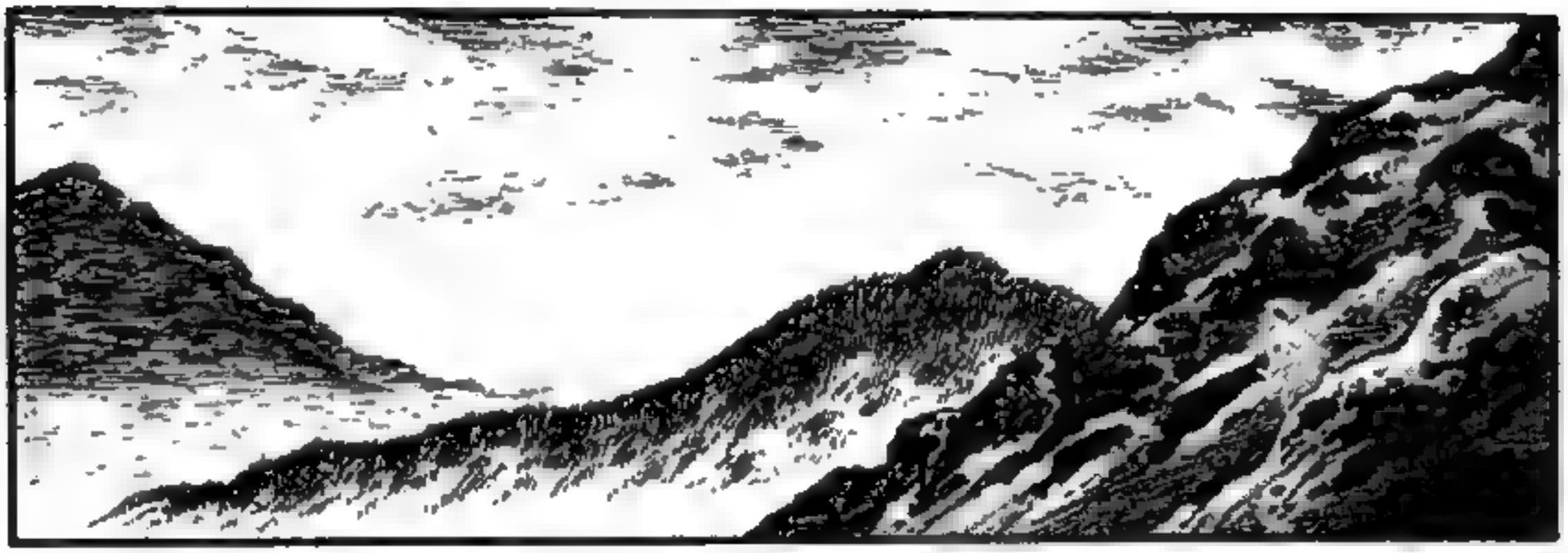
AND THEY ARE?

THERE ARE TWO REASONS WHY CHANG'AN NEVER FLOURISHED AS A TRUE CAPITAL, UNLIKE LUOYANG.

THE FIRST...

...IS THE LAND. IT IS TOUGH AND ILL-SUITED FOR AGRICULTURE, WHILE THE LOCAL WATERS ARE HIGH IN SALT.

THE SECOND REASON IS EVIDENT FROM A GLANCE AT THOSE MOUN-TAINS.

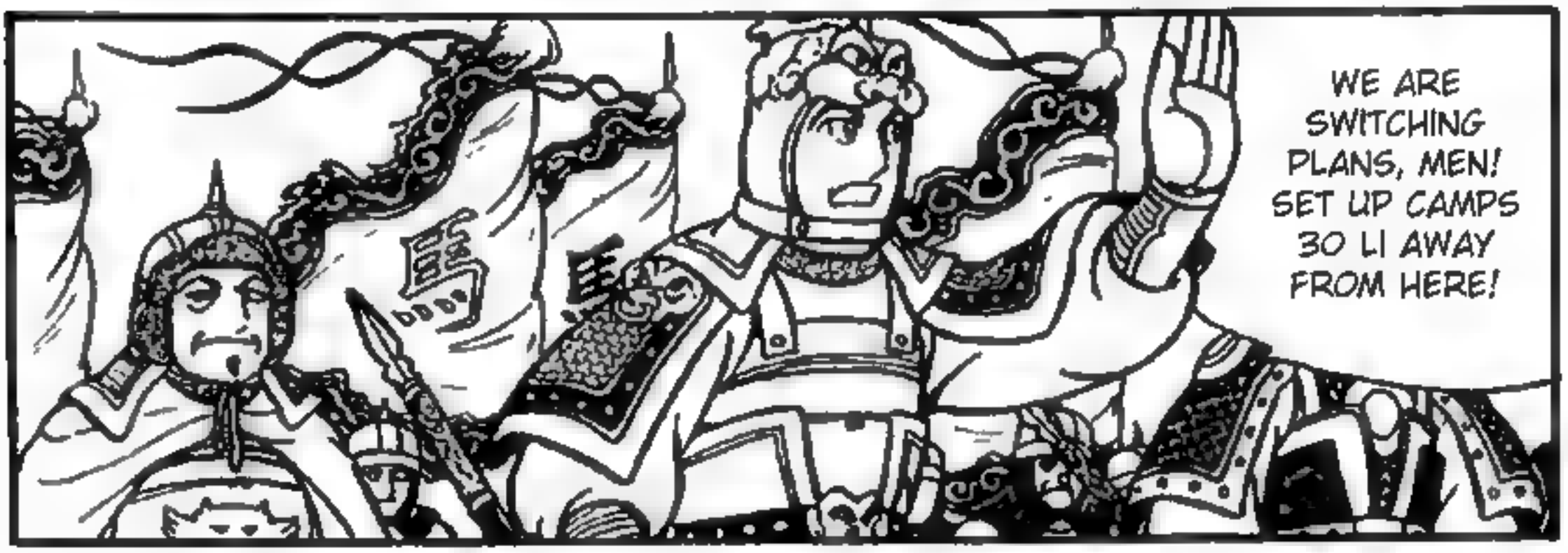


I SEE.

THEIR BARRENNESS OFTEN CAUSES A SHORTAGE OF FIREWOOD.

HMM...

THUS, I PROPOSE THAT WE


WE ARE SWITCHING PLANS, MEN! SET UP CAMPS 30 LI AWAY FROM HERE!

THE ENEMIES ARE RETREAT-ING?

HMM?

NEVERTHELESS, WE CAN'T LET OUR GUARD DOWN. THEY MAY BE PLANNING SOMETHING.

I'M NOT SURE...

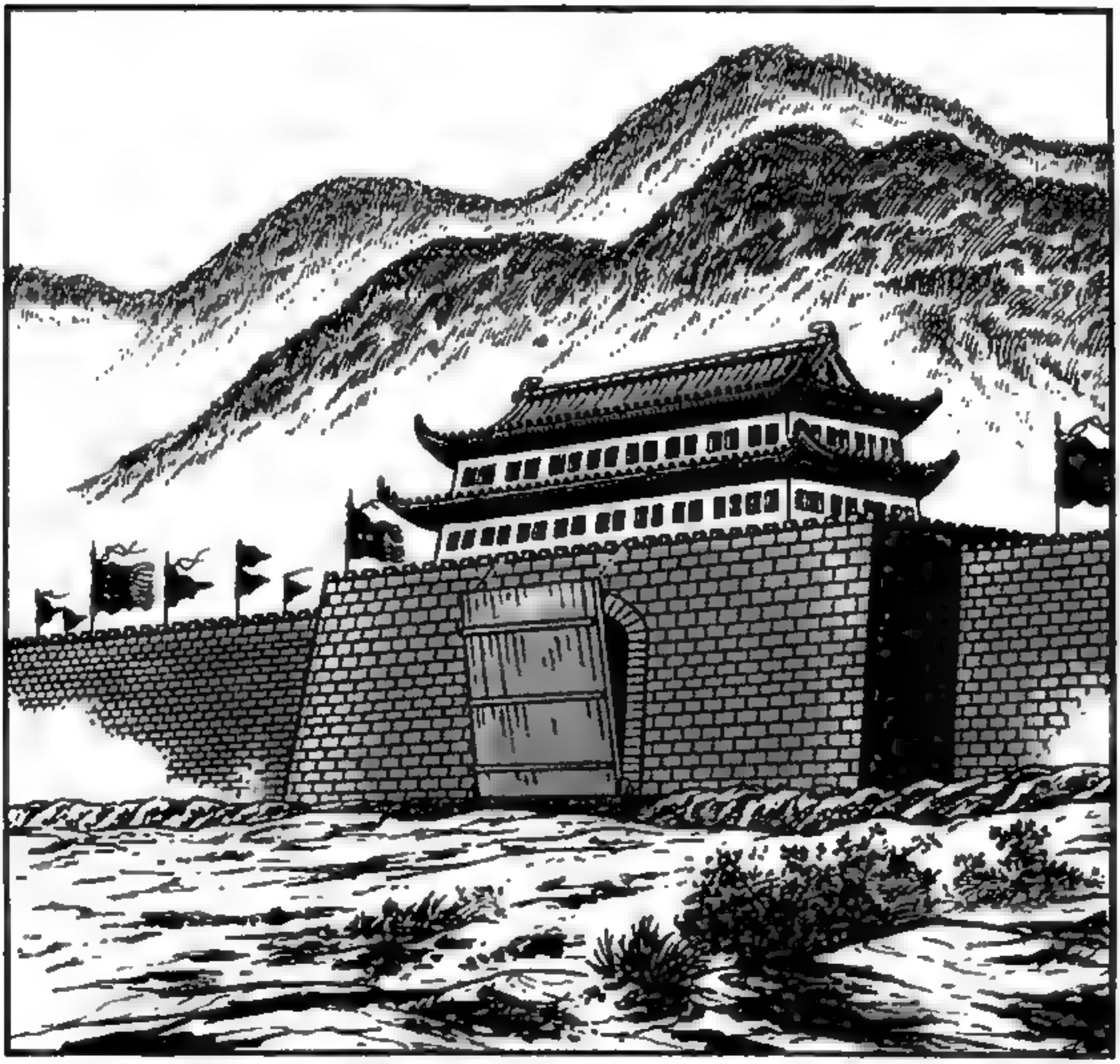
WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS, BROTHER?

YES, SIR.

AND FORBID ALL SOLDIERS AND CITIZENS FROM MOVING IN AND OUT OF THE CITY GATES FOR THE TIME BEING.

SEND OUT SPIES TO OBSERVE THE ENEMIES CLOSELY.

CHANG'AN FALLS



WELL WHATEVER THE REASON IS, IT'S DULL AS HELL TRYING TO STAY ON GUARD FOR ENEMIES WE CAN'T EVEN SEE.

TELL ME ABOUT IT.

I THINK THEY BACKED OFF BECAUSE THEY WERE WARY OF OUR GAR-RISON MAKING A SURPRISE NIGHT RAID.
WHAT'RE THEY DOING SO FAR AWAY FOR?

NO, SIR. THEY AREN'T EVEN SHOWING THE SLIGHTEST INDICATION OF MOVING.
AND? ANY UPDATES ON THE ENEMY ARMY?

HMM, WHAT TO DO...

MORE IMPORTANTLY SIR, THE CITIZENS ARE ALL A FUSS ABOUT RUNNING OUT OF FIREWOOD AND WATER.

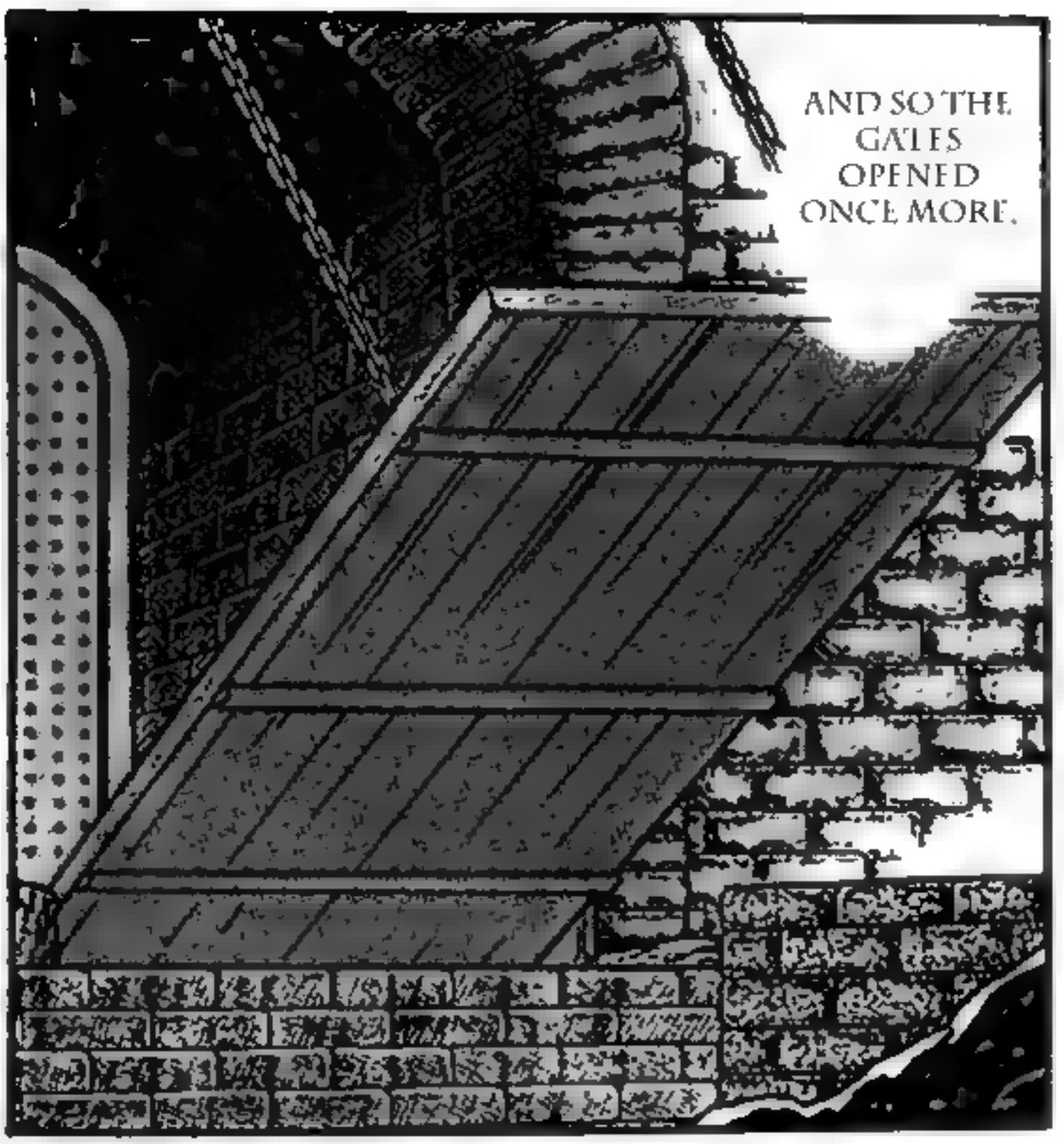
TRUE, TRUE...

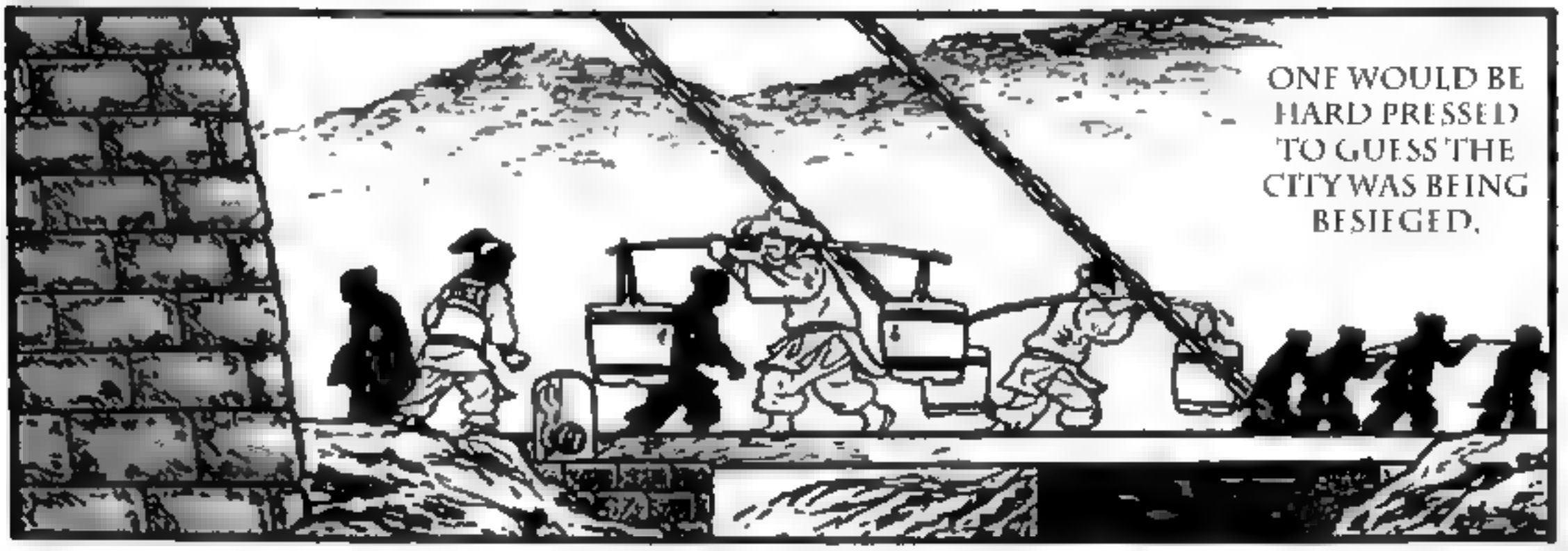
IF I MAY INTRUDE, SIR, THE ENEMIES ARE CAMPED OUT VERY FAR AWAY. EVEN IF THEY WERE TO SHOW UP AGAIN, THERE SHOULD BE PLENTY OF TIME FOR OUR CITIZENS TO HURRY BACK INSIDE THE CITY WALLS.

YES, SIR.

ALRIGHT, THEN. PERMIT THE CITIZENS TO GO OUT TO COLLECT FIREWOOD AND WATER.

TO THE
RELIEF OF
CHANG AN
CITIZENS

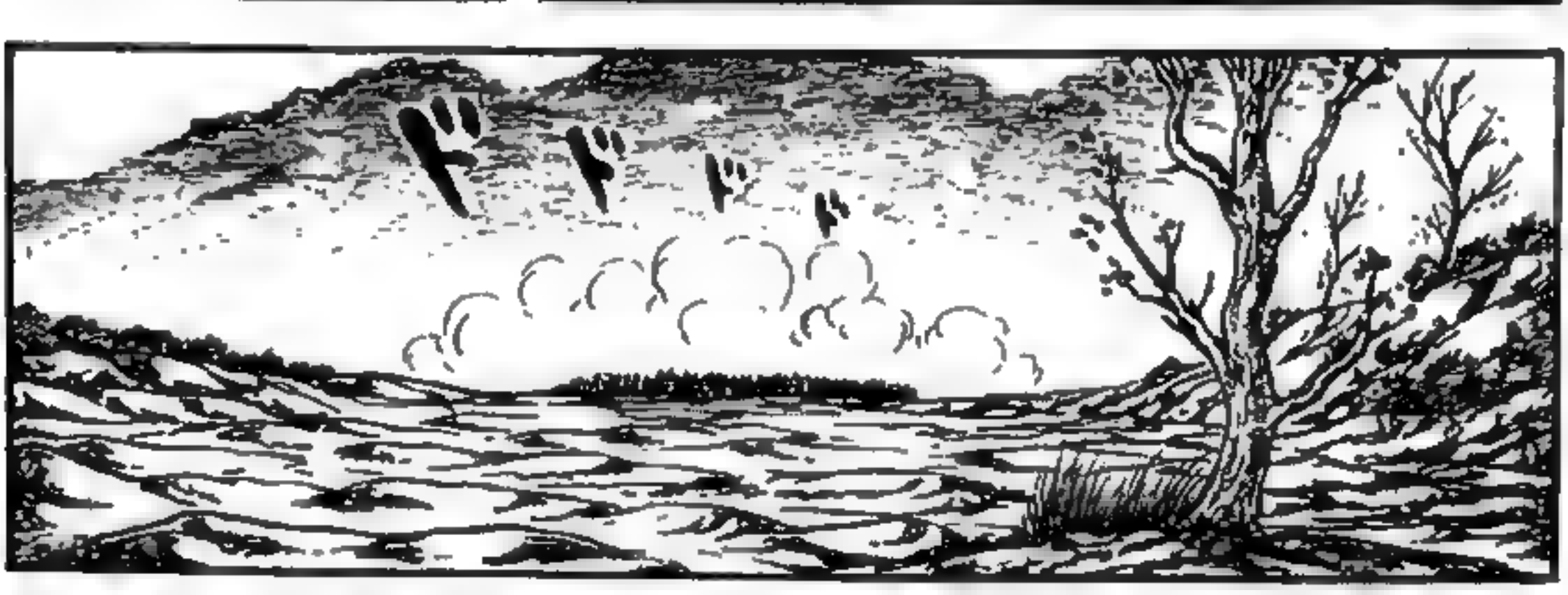

AND SO THE
GATES
OPENED
ONCE MORE.


ONE WOULD BE
HARD PRESSED
TO GUESS THE
CITY WAS BEING
BESIEGED.

FROM LOOKING
AT THE CITIZENS
RESUME THEIR
DAILY ACTIVITIES
AS USUAL

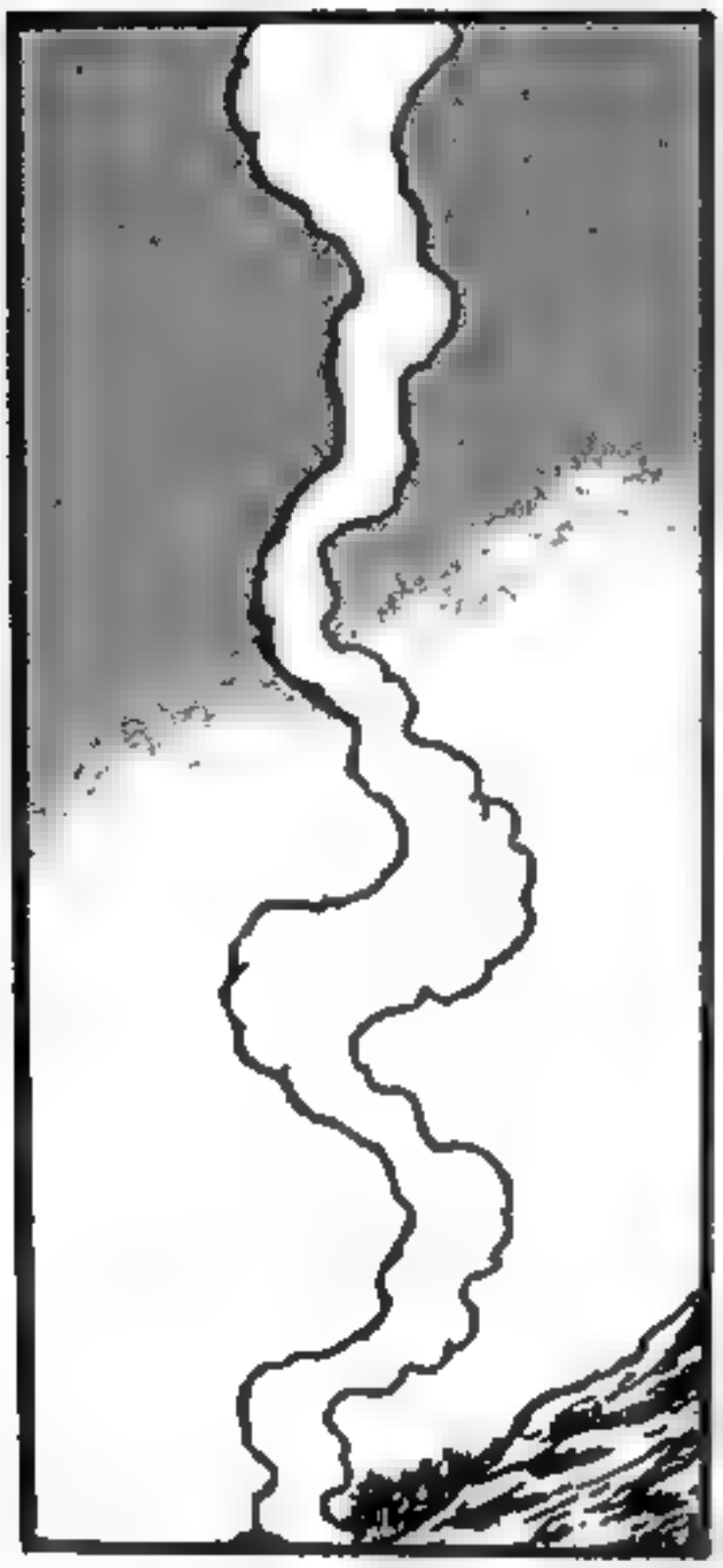
HM?

AHH!



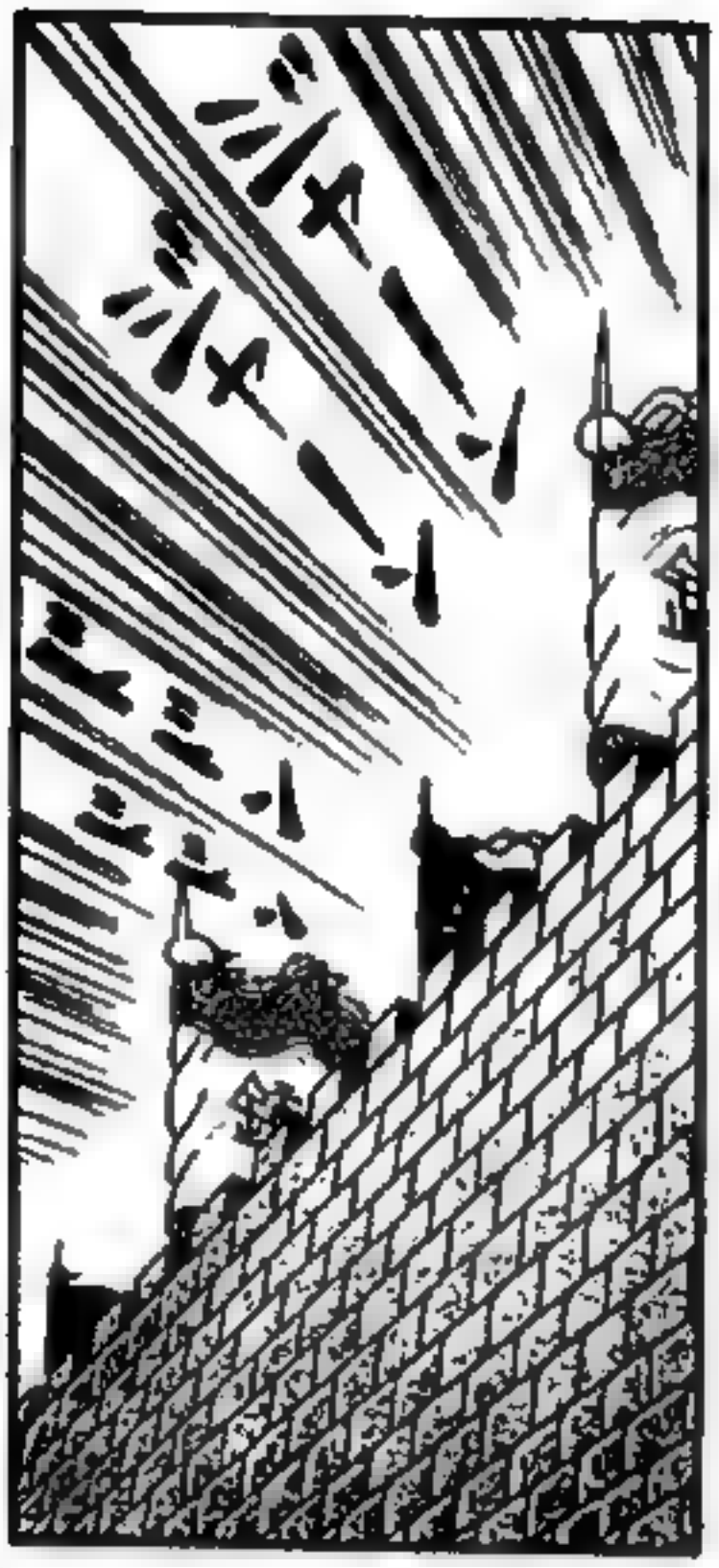
START THE SMOKE SIGNAL!

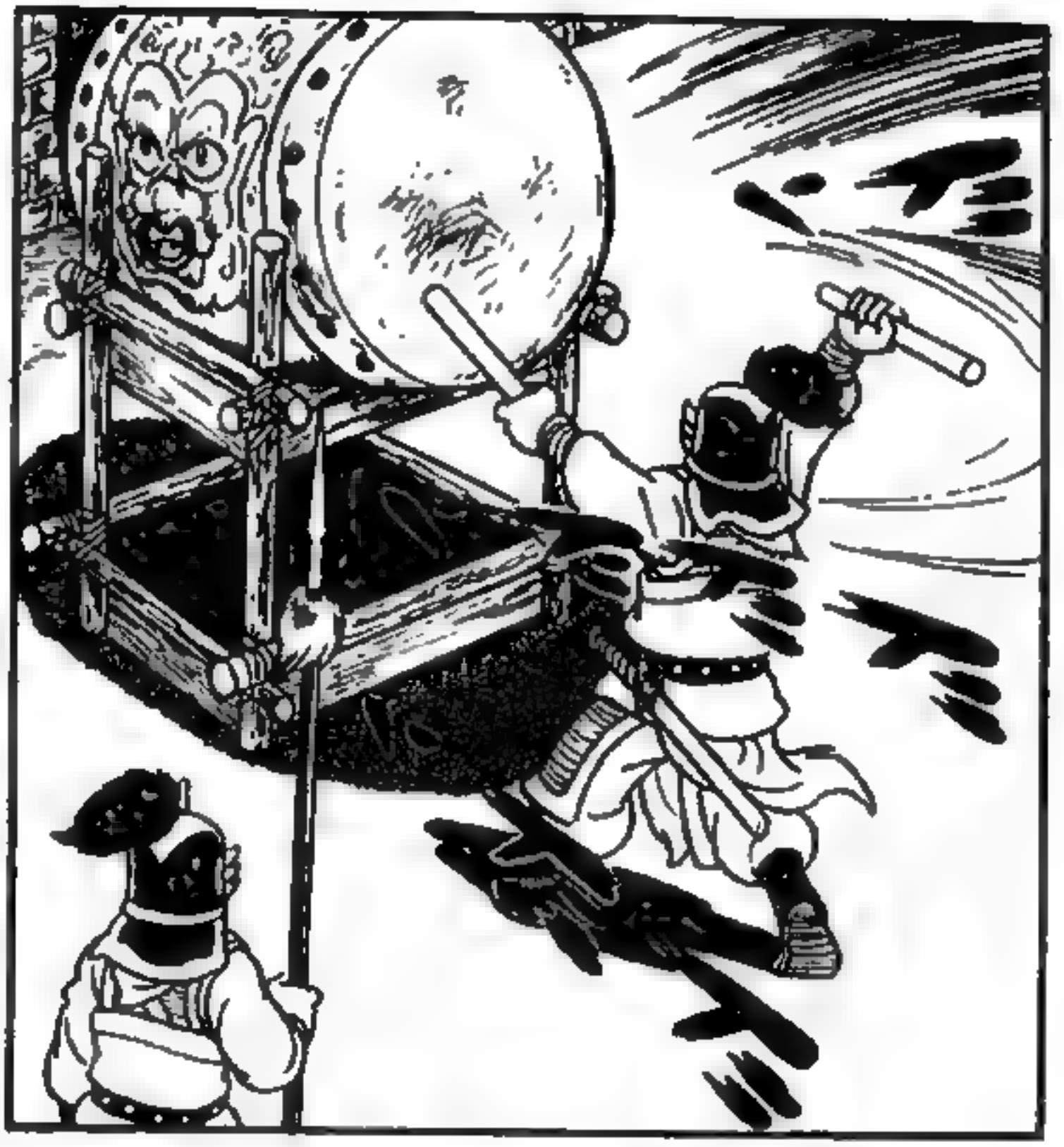
ENEMY FORCES SPOTTED!



SOUND THE DRUMS TO ALERT THE PEOPLE OUTSIDE!

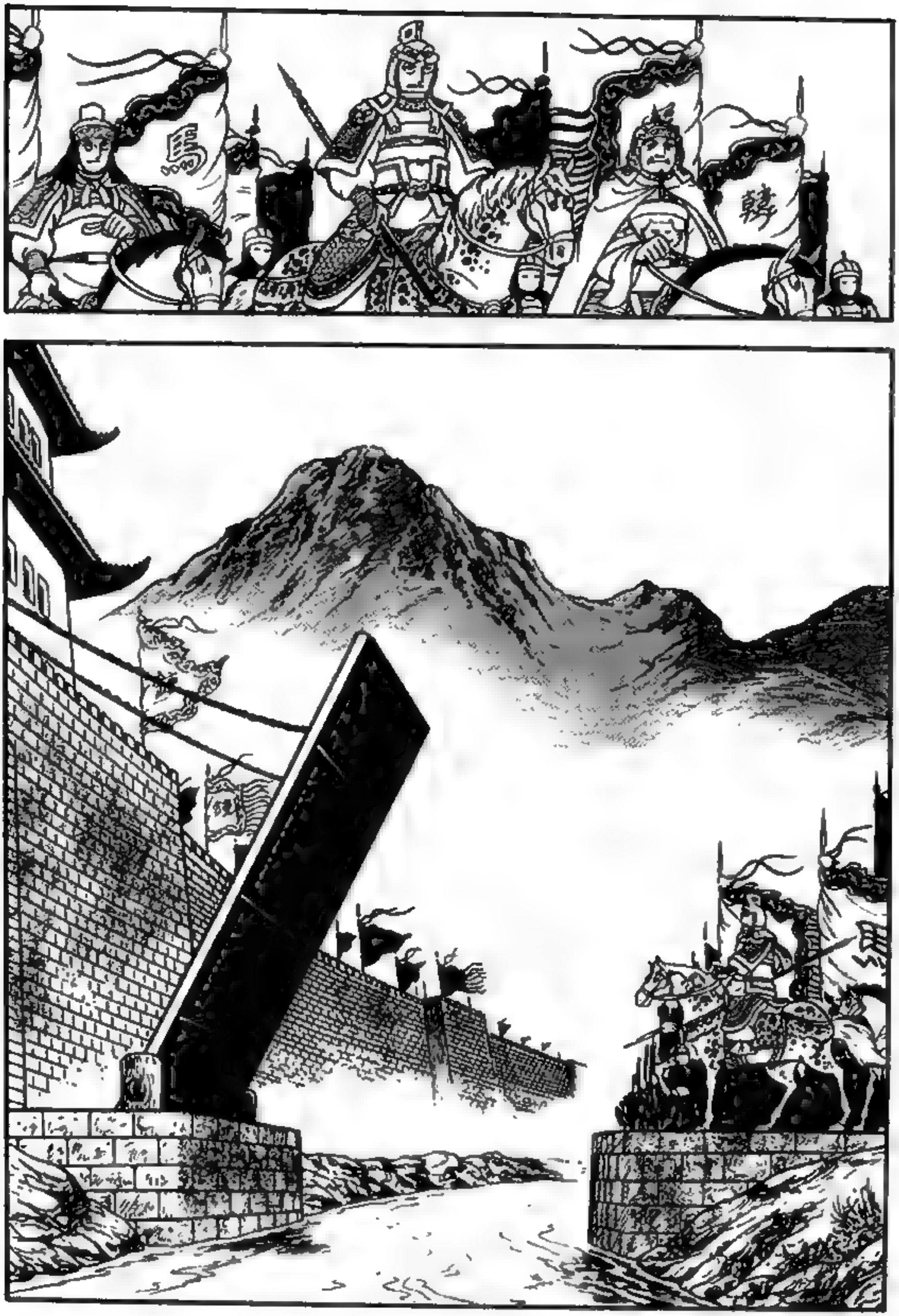
SMOKE SIGNAL SPOTTED, CAPTAIN!





AGHH, THE ENEMIES ARE COMING!

LIFT THE DRAW-BRIDGE!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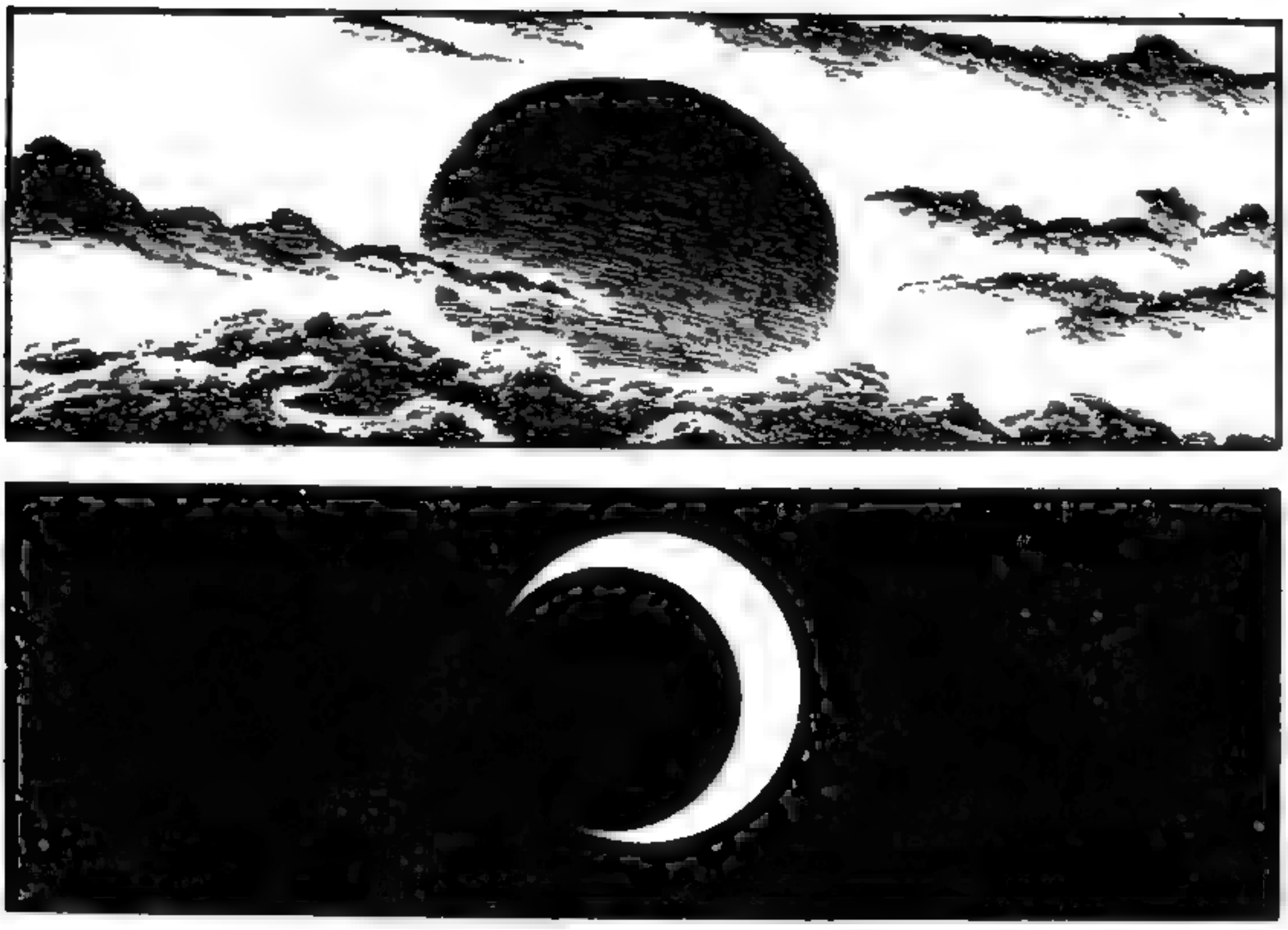
韓

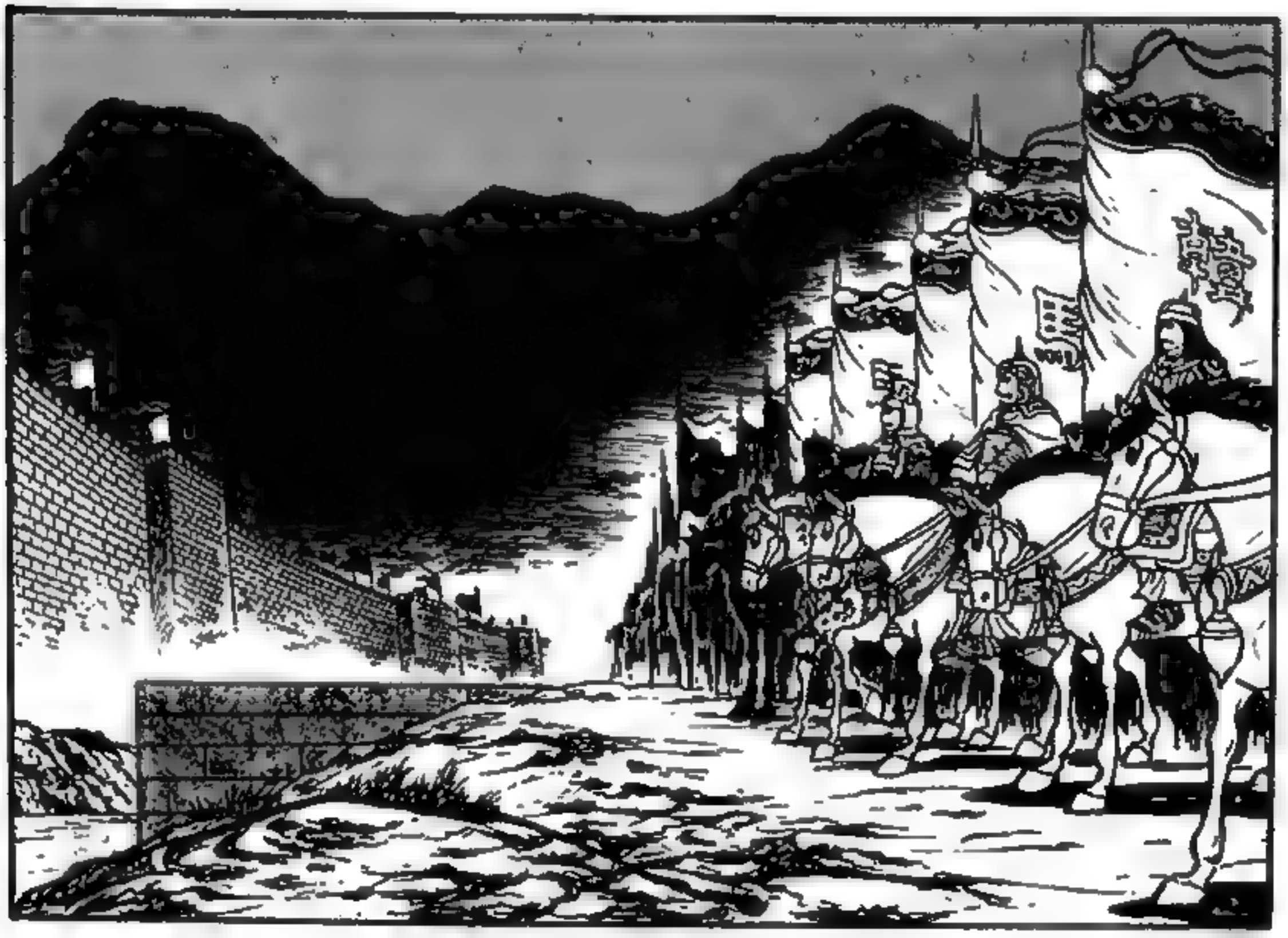
SURRENDER NOW OR I'LL BURN EVERY LAST MAN, WOMAN, AND CHILD IN CHANG'AN!

SO BE IT. YOU BEST NOT FORGET MY WORDS JUST NOW.

HAHAHA. WALLS DO NOT CRUMBLE FROM MERE THREATS, MA CHAO.

TRY AND TAKE CHANG'AN BY FORCE IF YOU WISH.

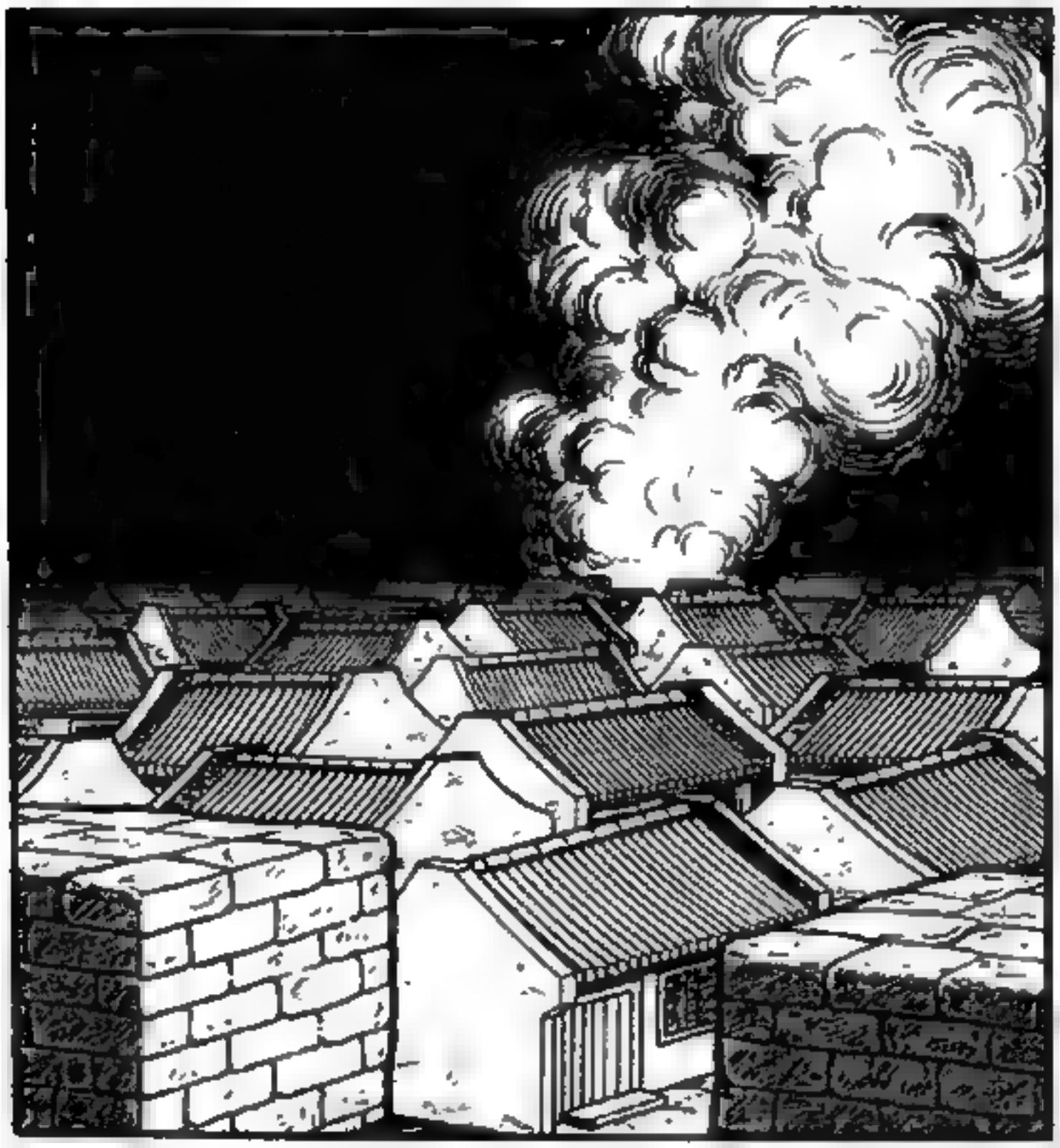




HUH?

SIR!

HMM...
BROTHER, THIS TIME THEY'RE NOT EVEN BACK-ING OFF A SINGLE STEP.



AH!

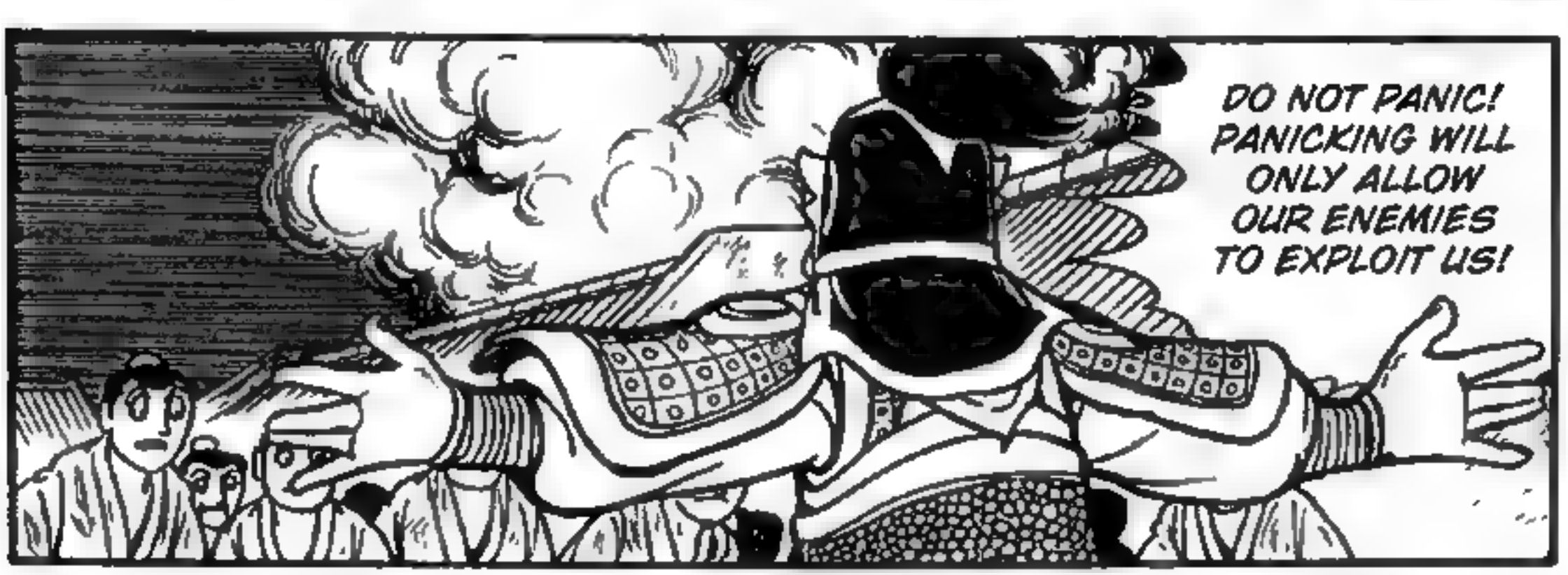
AHH!
WHAT!?
THERE ARE FIRES ALL OVER THE CITY!

WHAT!?

ENEMIES HAVE SNUCK IN AND STARTED FIRES!
ENEMY ALERT! ENEMY ALERT!

WHAT!?

BROTHER, ALLOW ME TO ATTEND TO THIS MATTER.


DO NOT PANIC! PANICKING WILL ONLY ALLOW OUR ENEMIES TO EXPLOIT US!

WE'VE ALREADY SNUCK INSIDE, DISGUISED AS CIVILIANS!

WHAT!?

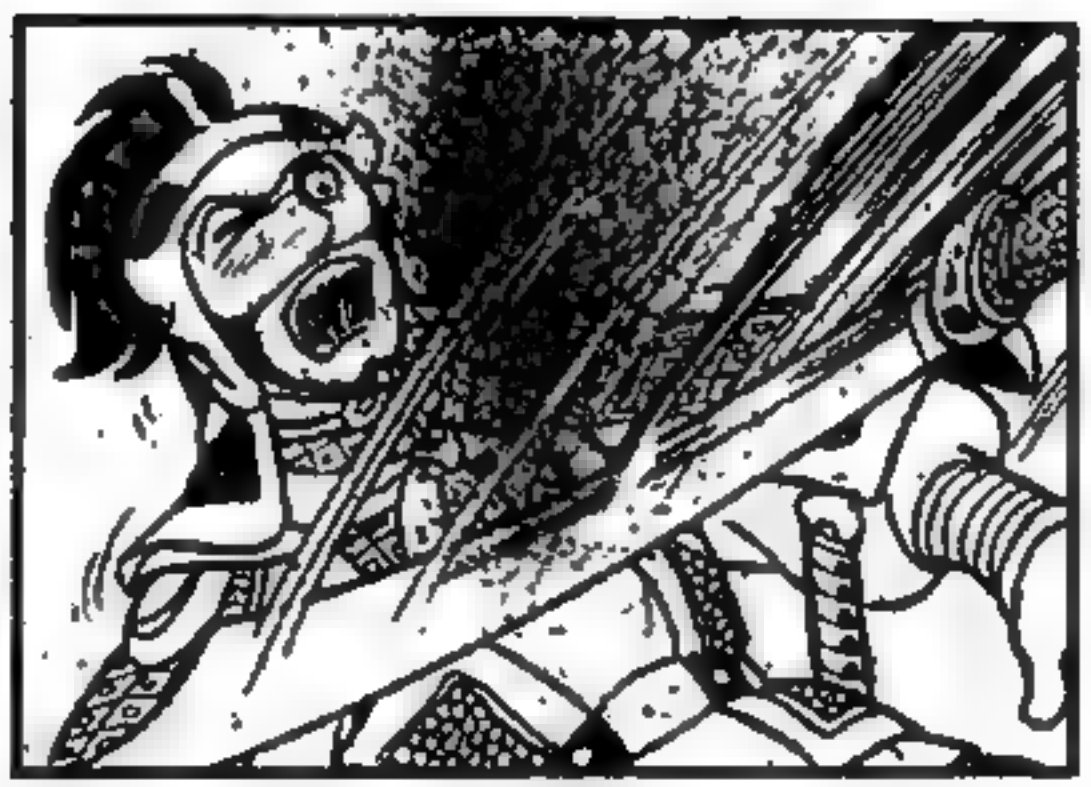
IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT!

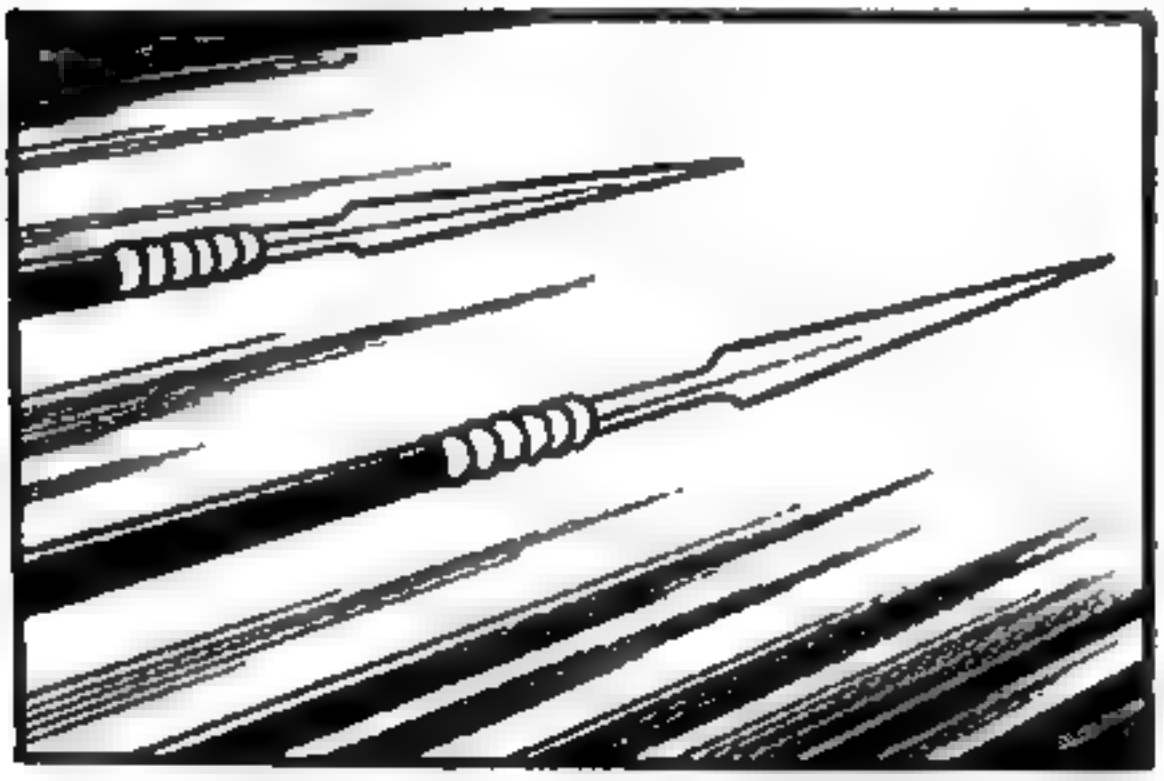
DIE!

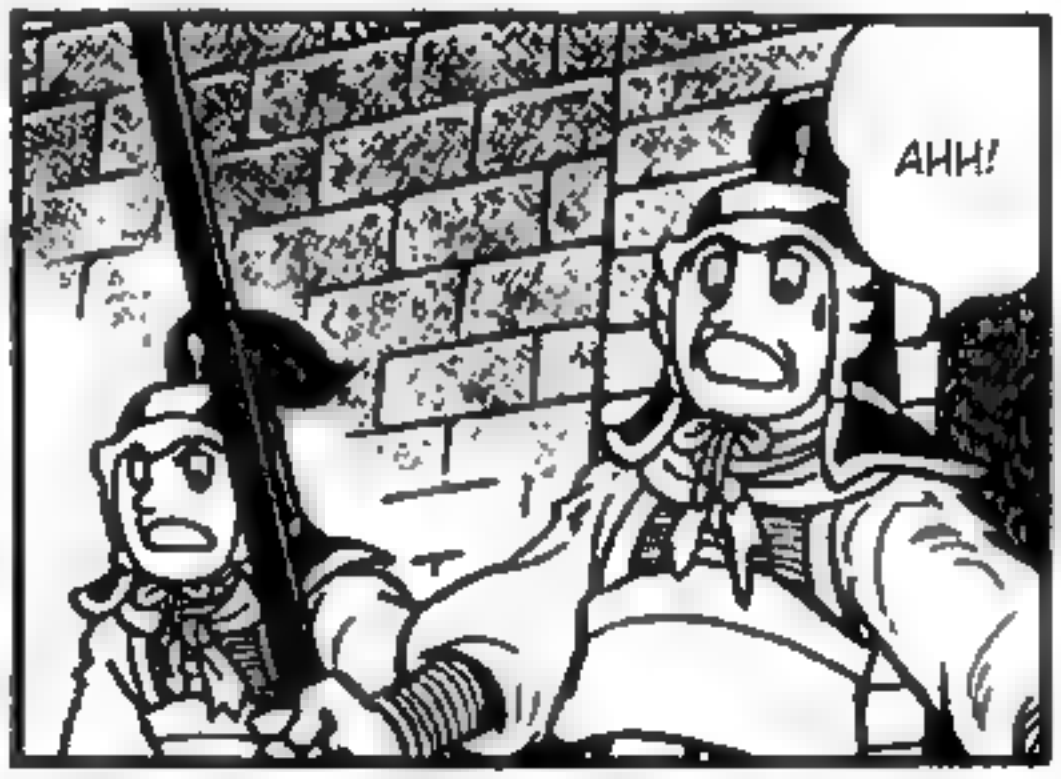
WHA!?

DID YOU THINK WE CAMPED OUT SO FAR AWAY FOR NOTHING?

NOW LET'S OPEN THE GATES AND LOWER THE DRAWBRIDGE!

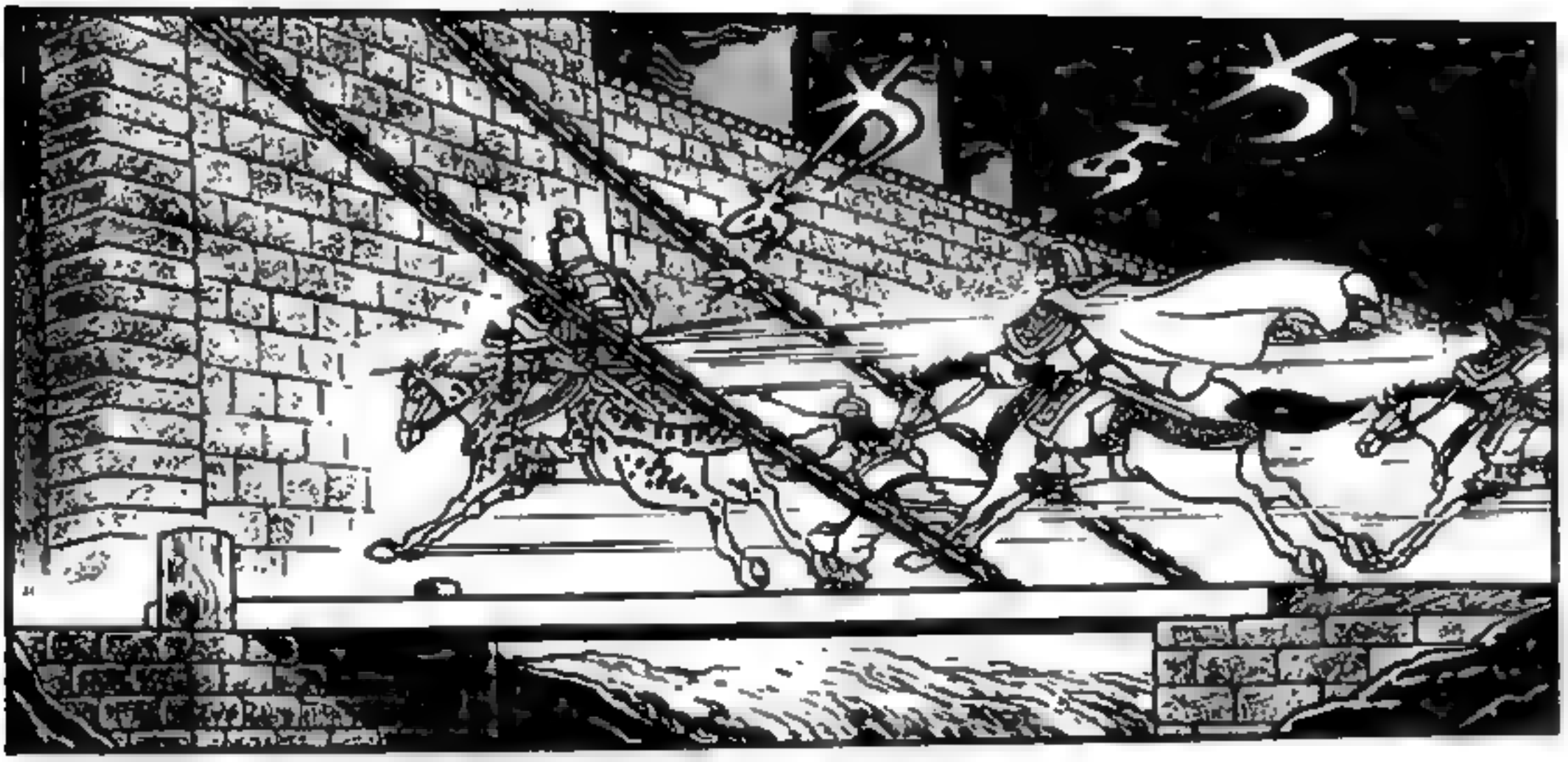


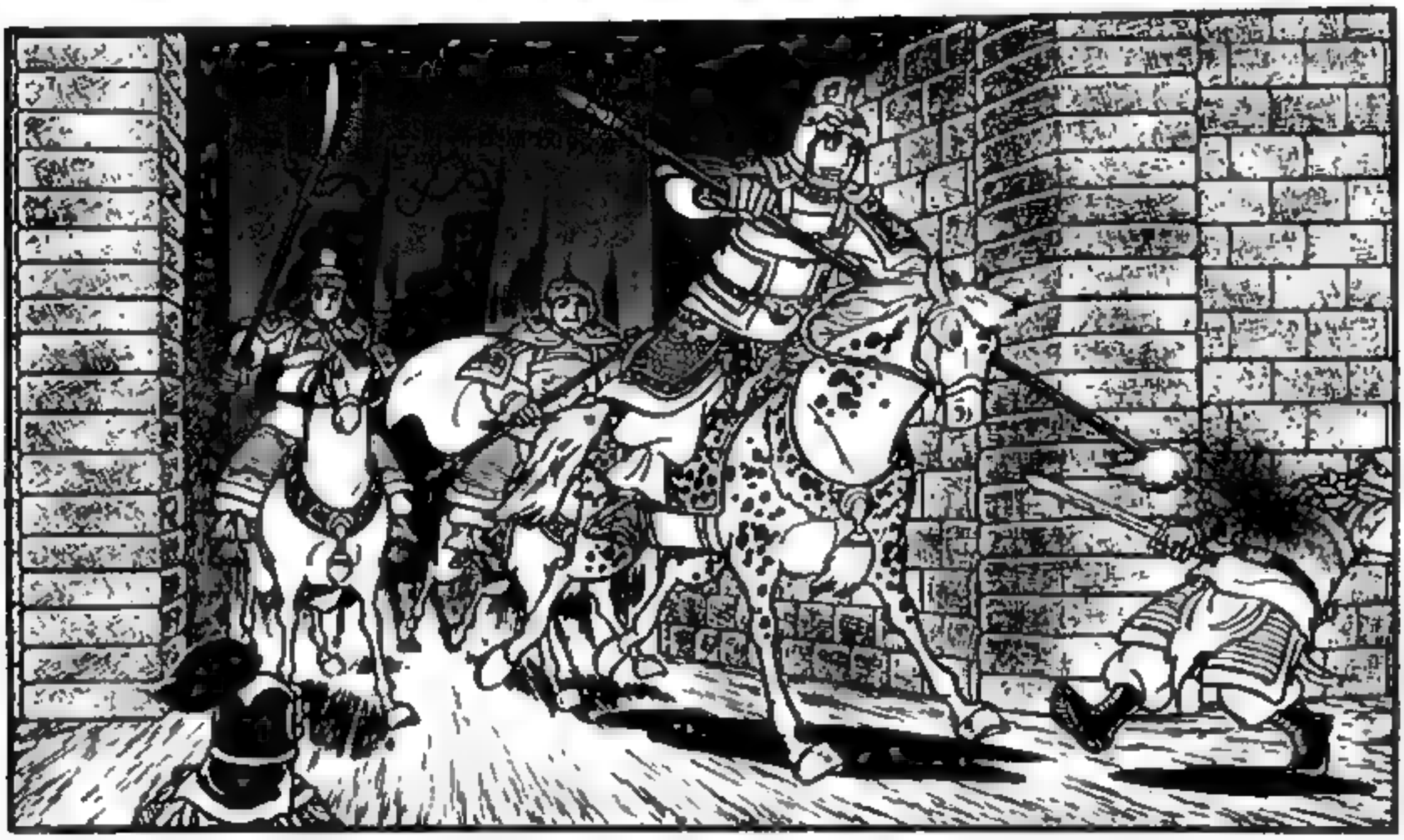


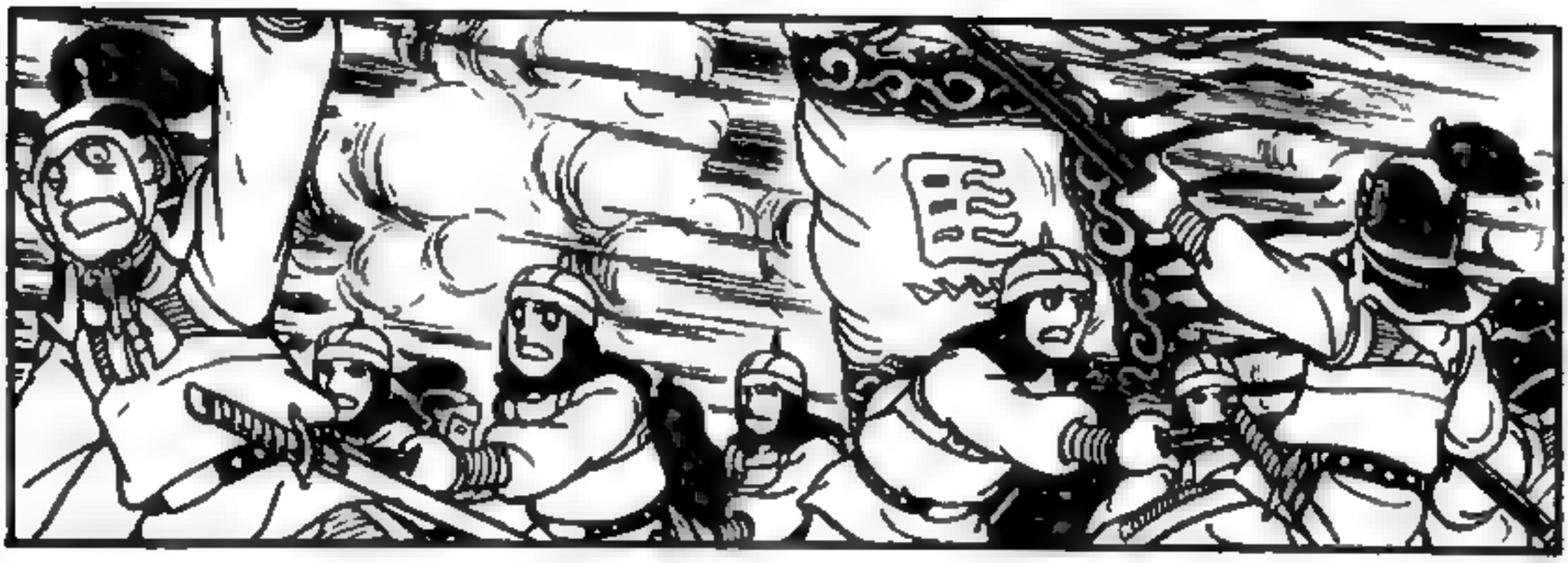

AHH!

NOW!

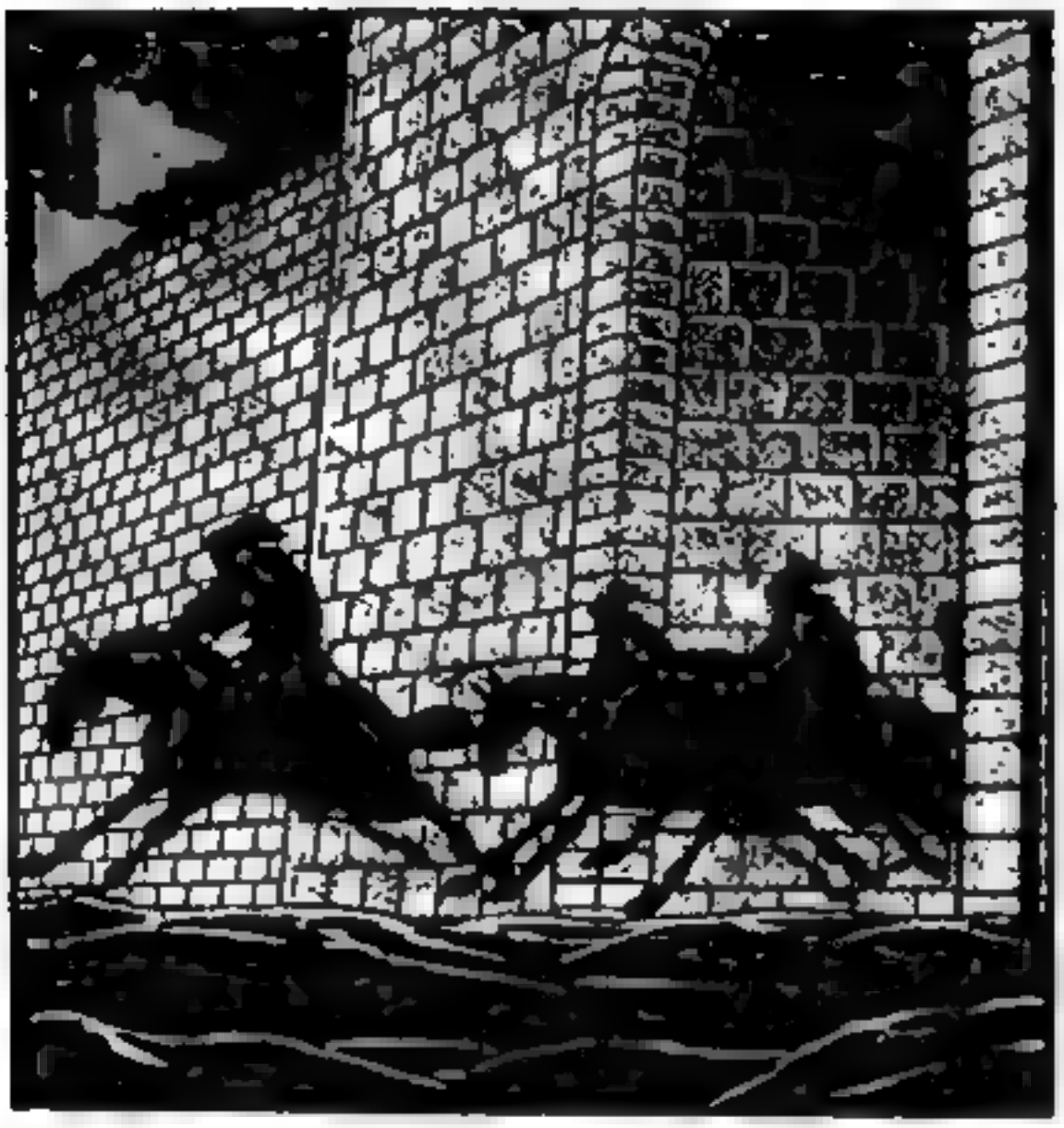
THE GATES HAVE OPENED.



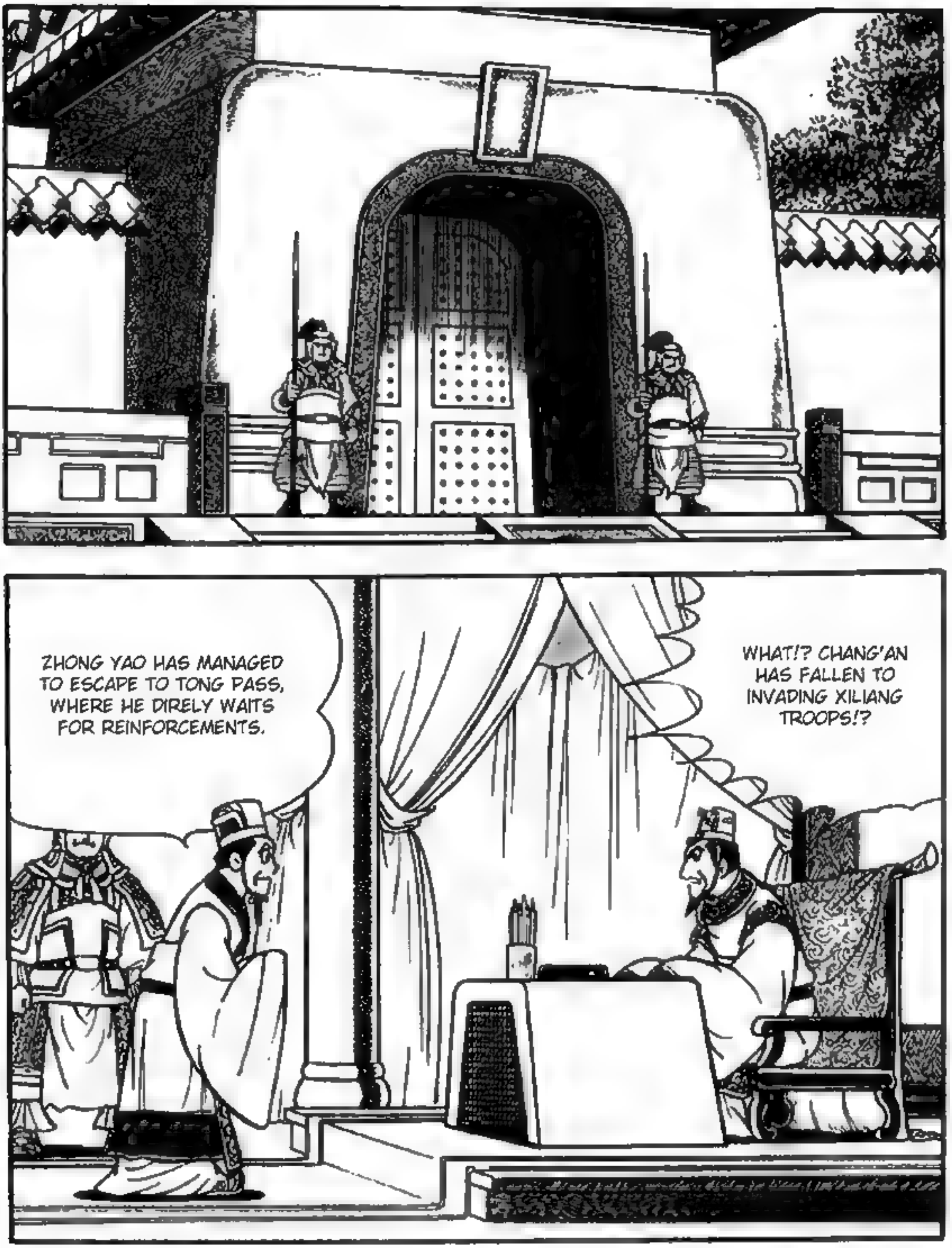




NGHH...
SIR, THIS CITY IS DONE FOR! YOU MUST ESCAPE THROUGH THE EASTERN GATES WHILE YOU STILL CAN!



DERISION


ZHONG YAO HAS MANAGED TO ESCAPE TO TONG PASS, WHERE HE DIRELY WAITS FOR REINFORCEMENTS.
WHAT!? CHANG'AN HAS FALLEN TO INVADING XILIANG TROOPS!?

THE REPORTS SAY 200,000.

AND HOW MANY DO THE ENEMIES NUMBER?

CAO HONG! XU HUANG!

HMM... AGAINST SUCH A LARGE FORCE, EVEN TONG PASS CAN'T HOLD OUT FOR LONG.

AT YOUR SERVICE, SIR.

YES?

SINCE THE ENEMIES VASTLY OUTNUMBER YOU, I FORBID YOU FROM FIGHTING OUTSIDE THE CASTLE WALLS.

TAKE 10,000 MEN AND HEAD IMMEDIATELY TO TONG PASS.

YES, CHANCELLOR.

INSTEAD, YOU ARE TO BUY ME ENOUGH TIME TO LEAD A BIGGER ARMY THERE. 10 DAYS SHOULD DO.

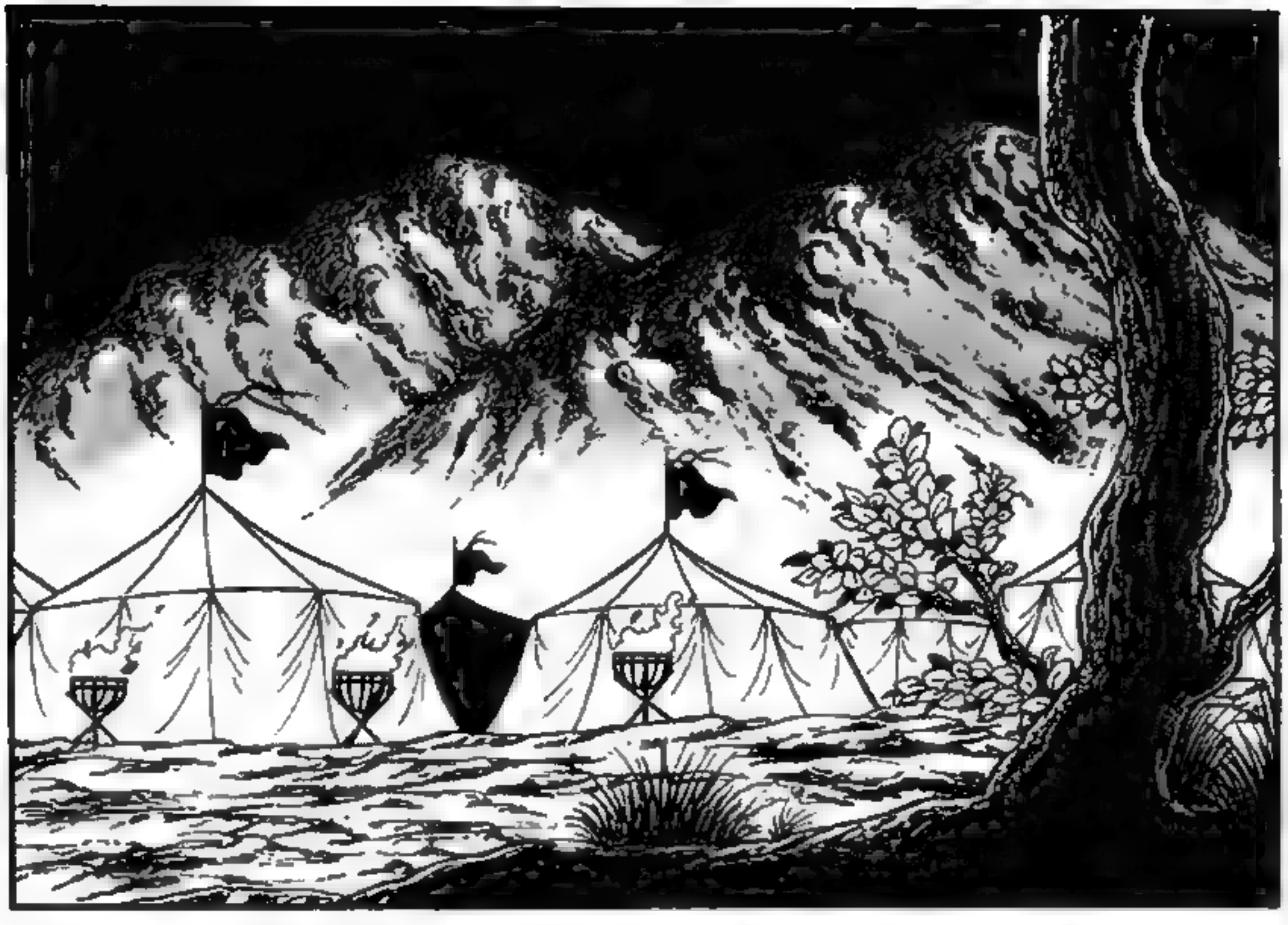
CHANCELLOR, OUR COUSIN CAO HONG CAN BE RASH AND IMPATIENT. I FEAR HE IS NOT SUITED FOR THIS MISSION.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, I WANT YOU TO RECALL MY TROOPS HEADING SOUTH TO WU AND LEAD THEM IMMEDIATELY TO TONG PASS.

WORRY NOT, XU HUANG WILL BE WITH HIM.

YES, CHANCELLOR.

WE MUST ARRIVE THERE WITHIN 10 DAYS NO MATTER WHAT.



AND HOW MANY ARE THERE?

AROUND 10,000 MEN, SIR.

SIR, ENEMY REINFORCEMENTS HAVE JUST ARRIVED AT TONG PASS.

WHO ARE THE ENEMY COM-MANDERS?

GENERALS CAO HONG AND XU HUANG.

THAT WOULD MEAN THEY'RE MERELY THE VANGUARD SENT AHEAD TO BUY SOME TIME FOR CAO CAO'S MAIN FORCES.

I BELIEVE THEY'RE BOTH OFFENSIVELY-ORIENTED WARRIORS.

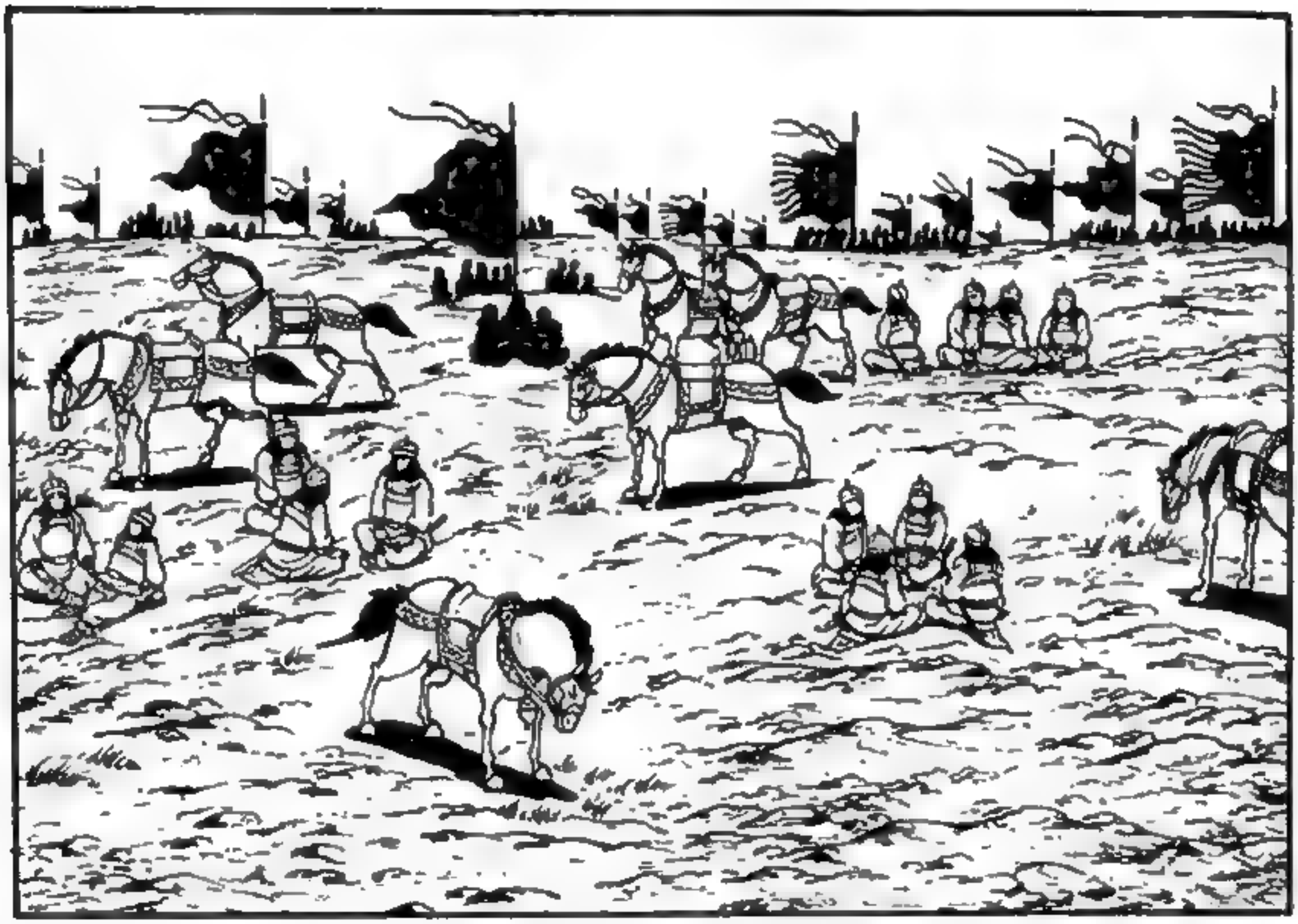
CAO HONG AND XU HUANG...

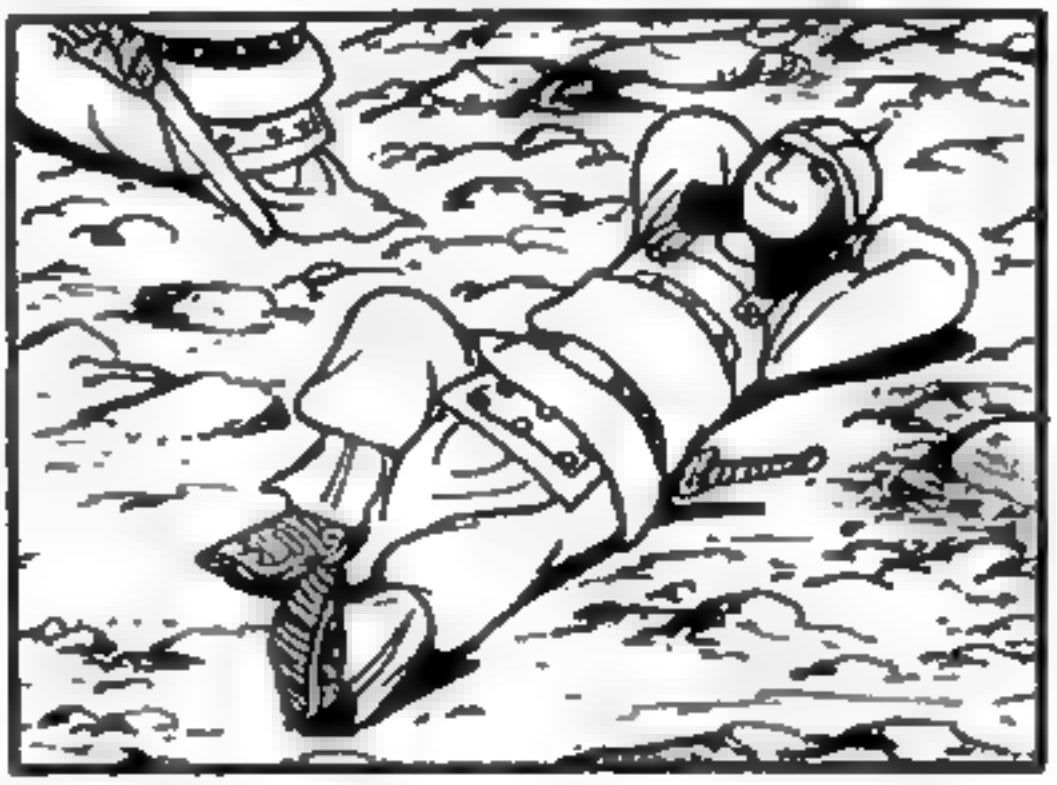
YOU MEAN TO SAY YOU HAVE A PLAN?

IF IT'S THOSE TWO, THEN CONQUERING TONG PASS SHOULD NOT BE TOO DIFFICULT.

WHISPER WHISPER

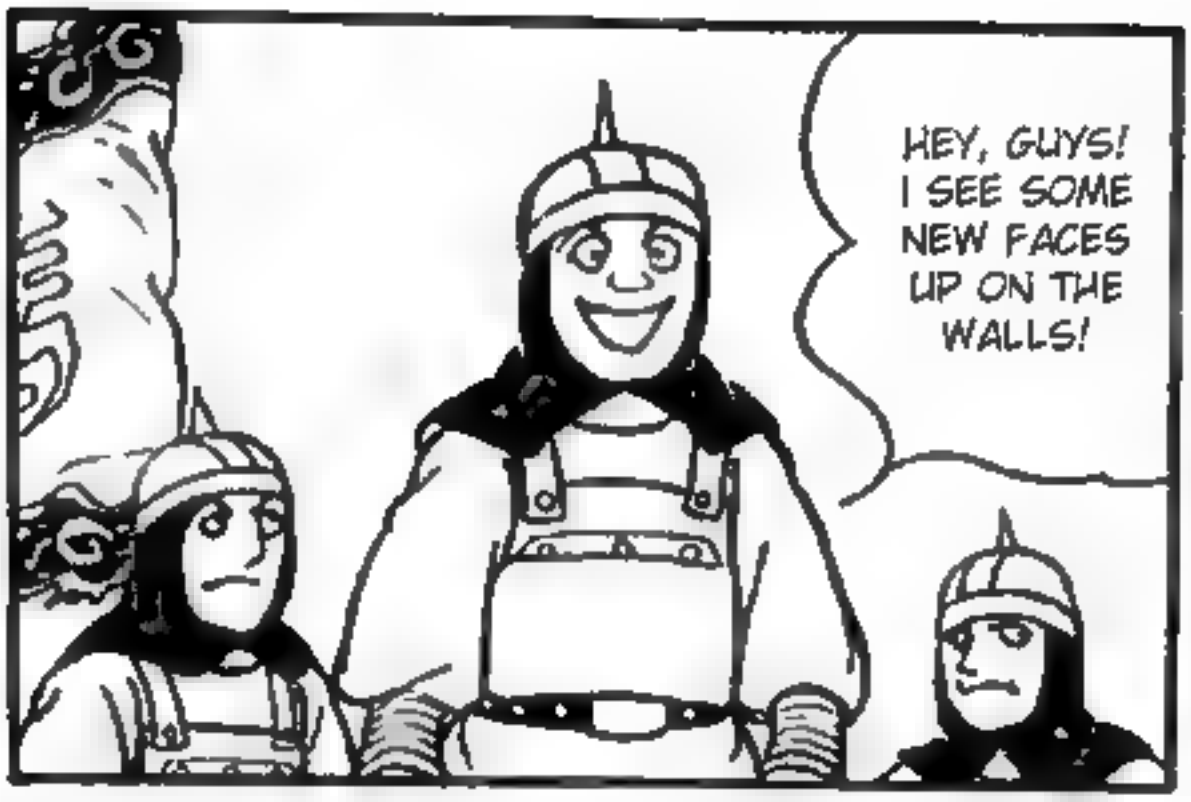
TONG PASS

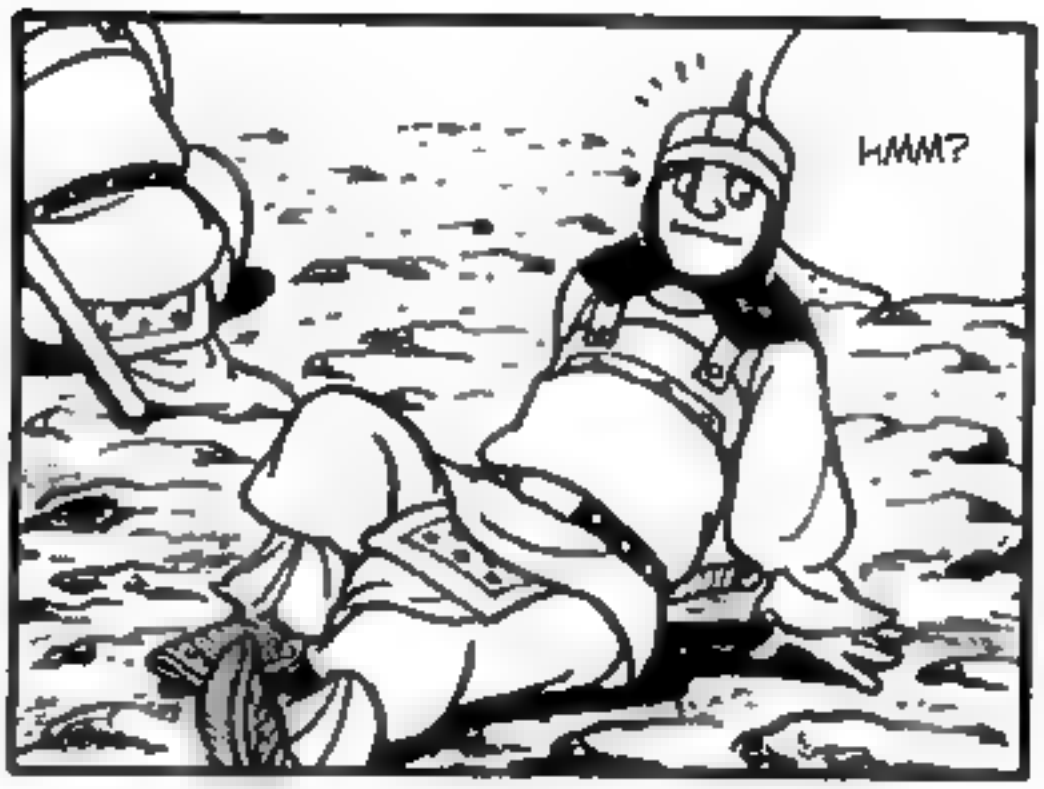


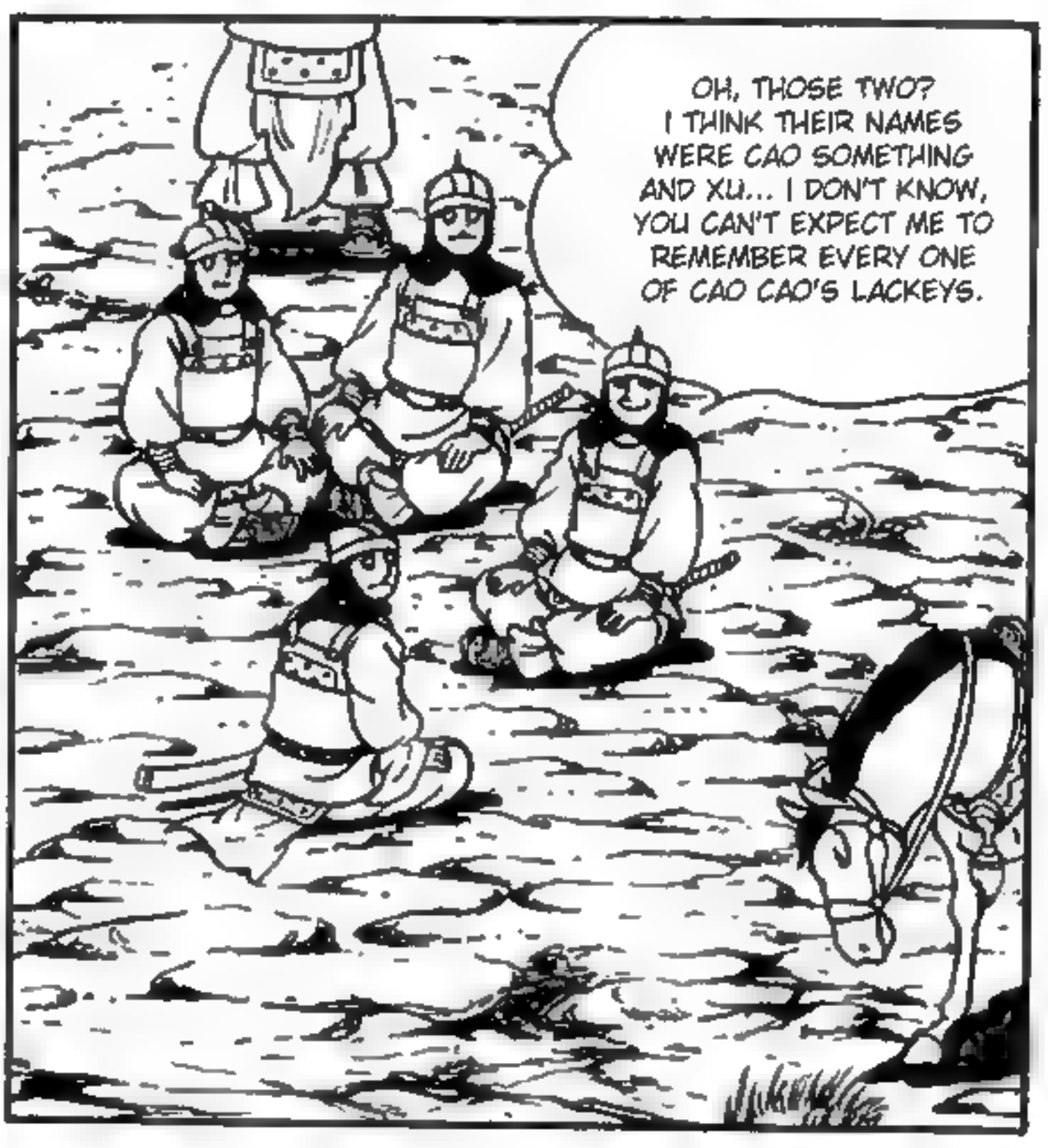


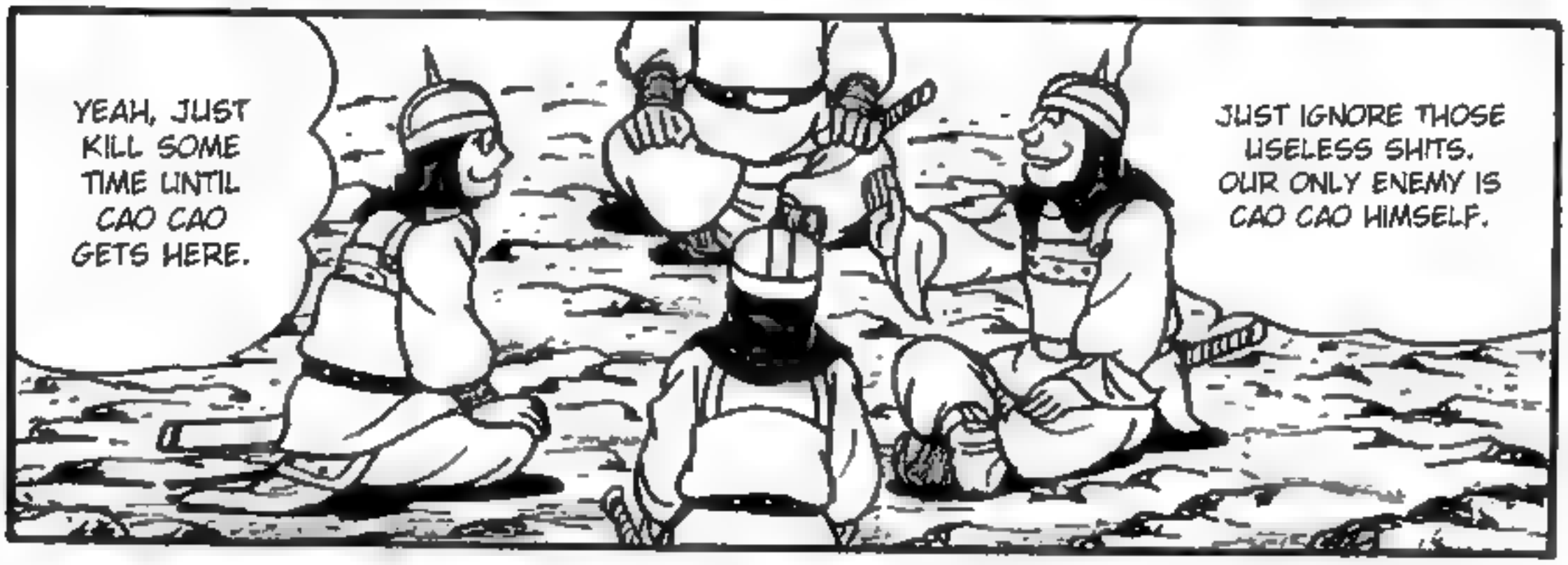
WHAT ARE THEY PLAYING AT?

SO THESE ARE XIJIANG'S FIERCE WARRIORS...?


HEY, GUYS! I SEE SOME NEW FACES UP ON THE WALLS!


HMM?


OH, THOSE TWO? I THINK THEIR NAMES WERE CAO SOMETHING AND XU... I DON'T KNOW, YOU CAN'T EXPECT ME TO REMEMBER EVERY ONE OF CAO CAO'S LACKEYS.


YEAH, JUST KILL SOME TIME UNTIL CAO CAO GETS HERE.
JUST IGNORE THOSE USELESS SHITS. OUR ONLY ENEMY IS CAO CAO HIMSELF.

I SURE HOPE CAO CAO GETS HERE SOON. MY BODY'S TURNING STIFF FROM JUST LAZING AROUND ALL DAY.

YAAWWN

HOW DARE HE SPEW THOSE INSULTS AT MY FACE...!

T-THOSE IMPUDENT BRAGGARTS!

OH REALLY? AND WHO'RE WE FIGHTING?

FOR FUN? WE'RE FIGHTING A WAR, YOU KNOW.

UGH, I'M SO DAMN BORED. AIN'T THERE SOMETHING WE CAN DO FOR FUN?

THE GUYS UP ON THE WALL.

OH PLEASE, AS IF YOU CAN CALL THOSE COWARDS ENEMIES.

ALRIGHT, GIVE ME SOME BEATS BY CLAPPING!

HA, THAT'S NOT BAD. SING SOME MORE.

♪ ARE THOSE CROWS OR SOLDIERS UP ON THE WALLS? THEY TOLD ME IT'S LITTLE OL' CAO HONG AND XU HUANG. TO THAT I SAY, "WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?" ♪

SURE THING!

EVEN SLEEPING WON'T RELIEVE MY BOREDOM. OH WON'T SOMEONE AT LEAST SCRATCH MY BACK AND PICK MY EARS~

FIGHTING WITH'EM COWARDS IS BORING ME TO DEATH. WHEN WILL THAT CAO CAO SHOW HIS HEAD?

THERE'S A LIMIT TO HOW MUCH I CAN TAKE!

NGHHH!

EVEN SO, WE CAME HERE TO FIGHT A WAR, NOT BE INSULTED!

ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU'LL JUST SIT HERE LISTENING TO THEIR BULLSHIT!?

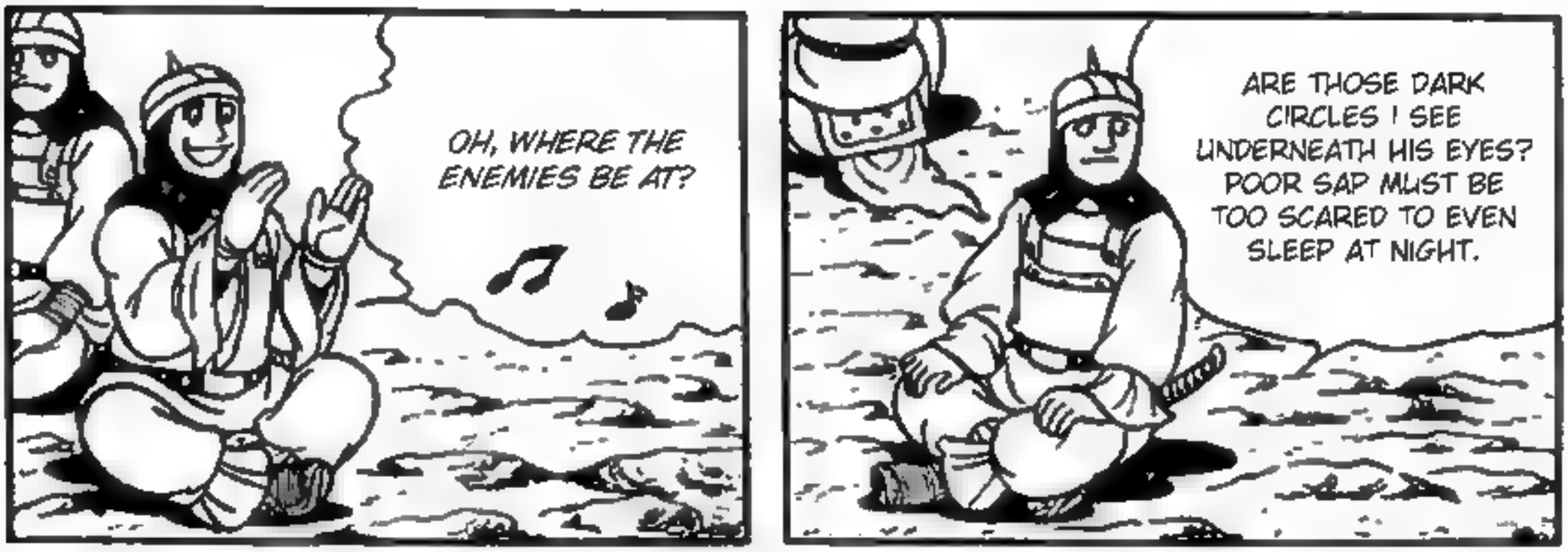
CAO HONG, HAVE YOU ALREADY FORGOTTEN THE CHANCELLOR'S ORDERS? WE ARE TO STAY BEHIND THESE WALLS AND GUARD TONG PASS FOR 10 DAYS.

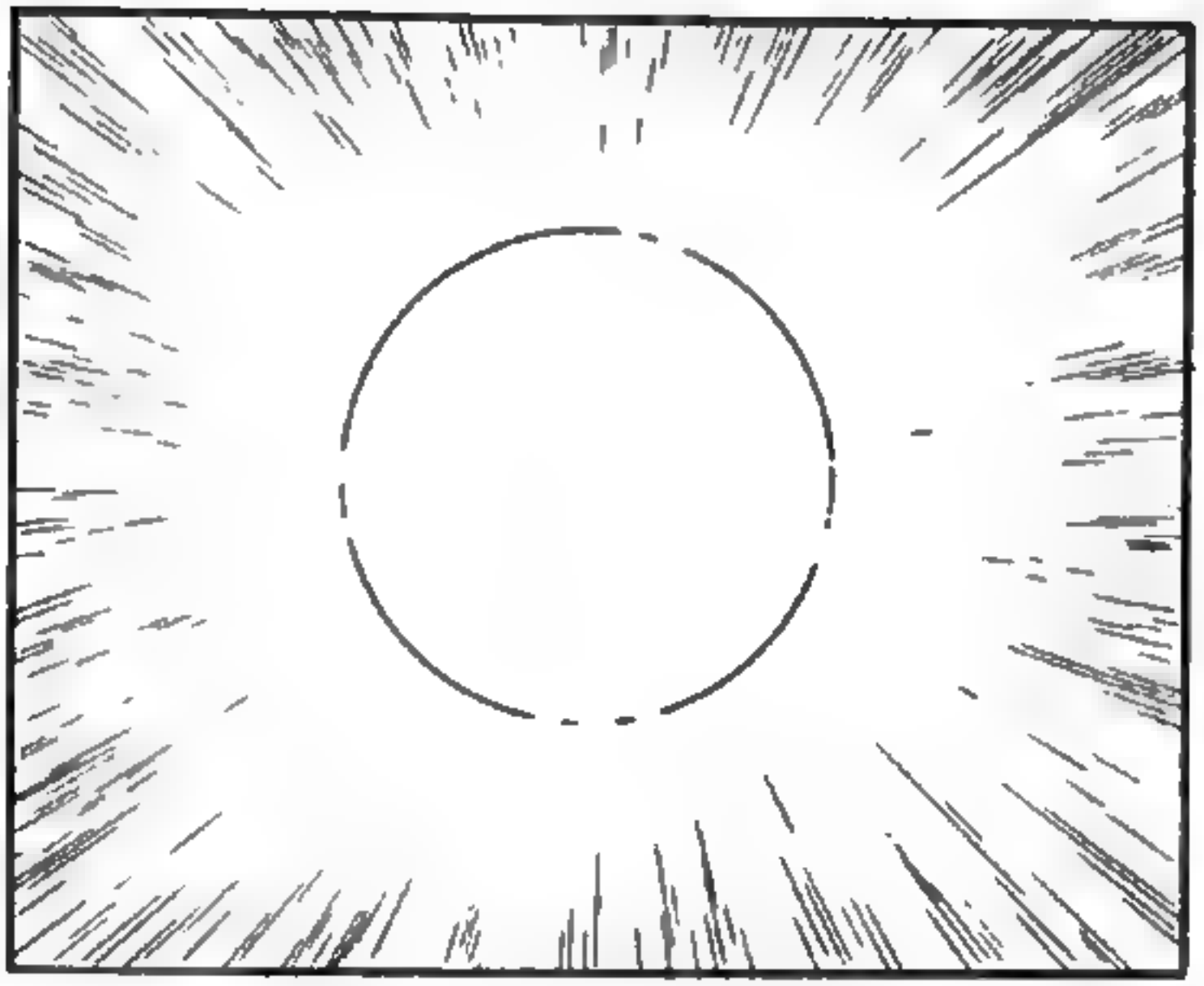
XU HUANG! LET US SHOW THESE FOOLS WHO WE REALLY ARE!

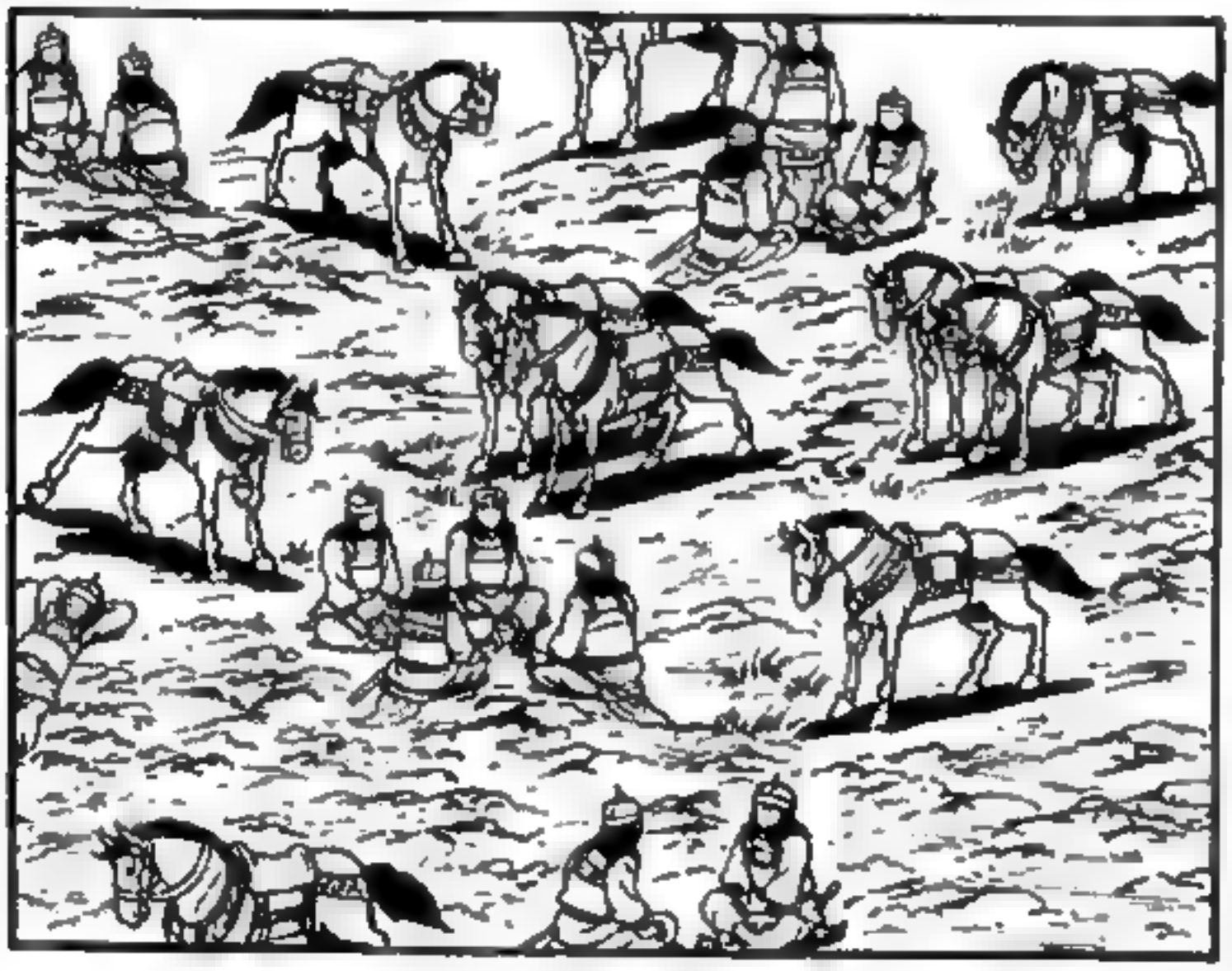
NGHH...

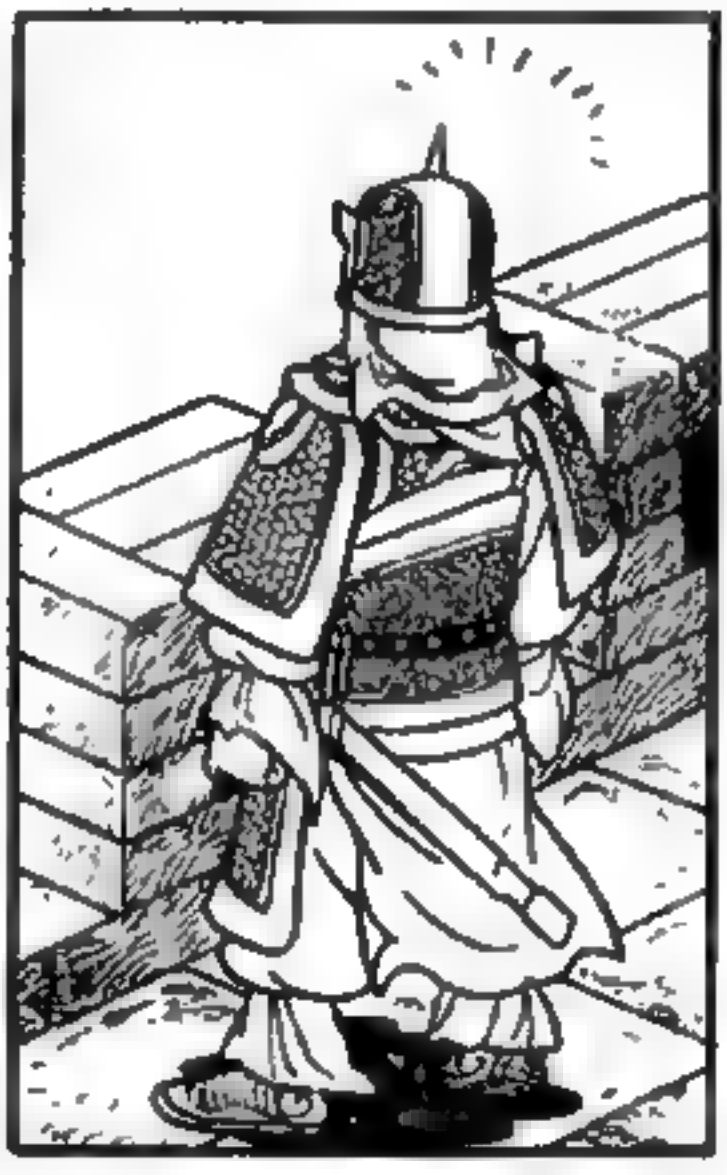
CALM DOWN, CAO HONG. THE ENEMIES ARE DELIBERATELY DOING THIS TO LURE US OUT OF THE CASTLE.

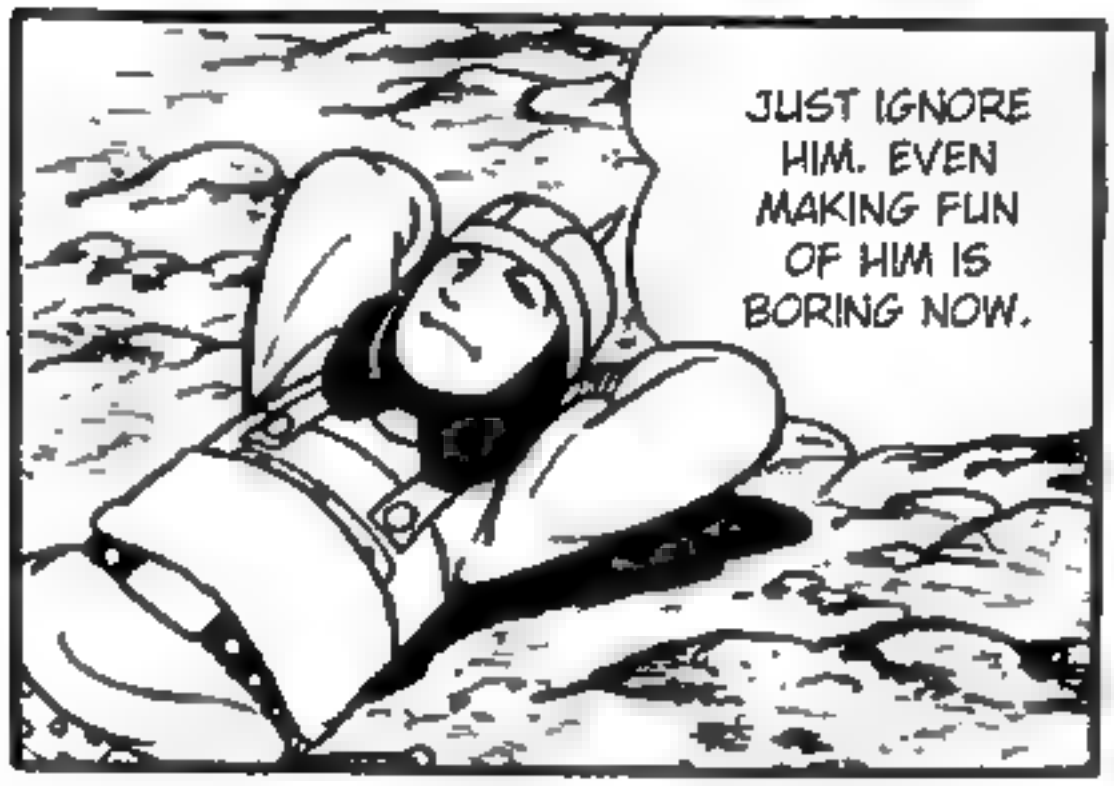
HEY THE TWO STOOGES ARE BACK AGAIN.

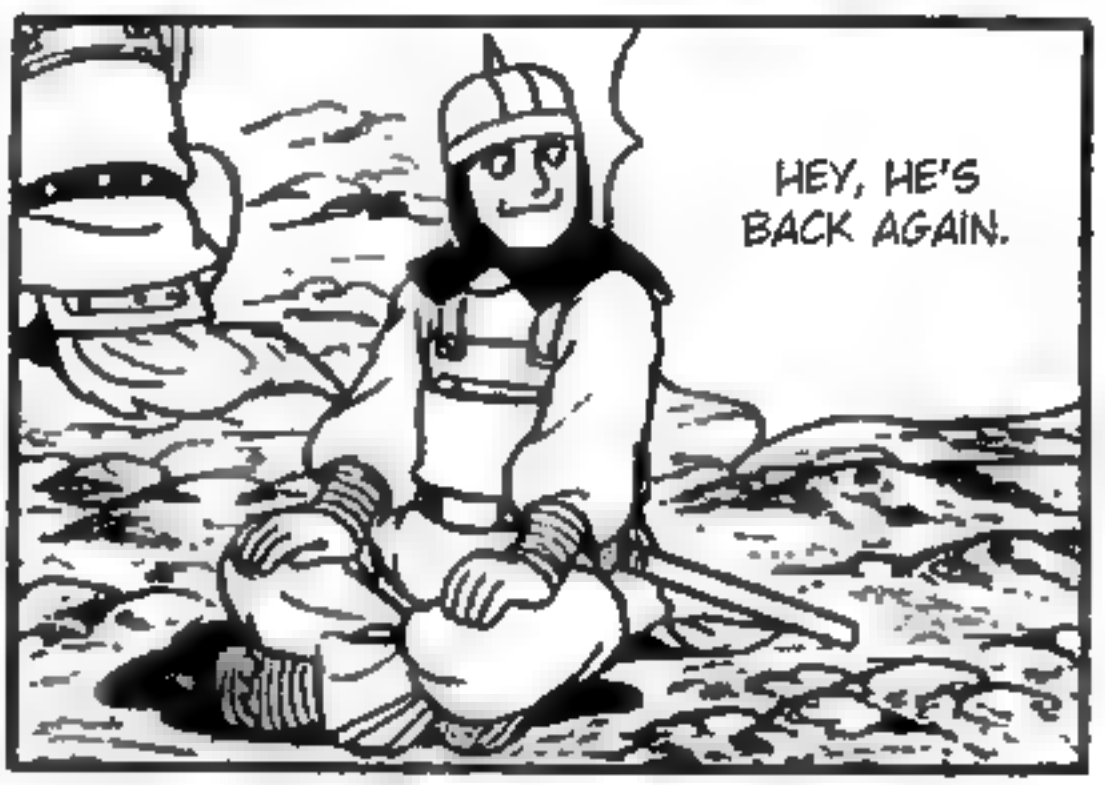

OH, WHERE THE ENEMIES BE AT?
ARE THOSE DARK CIRCLES I SEE UNDERNEATH HIS EYES? POOR SAP MUST BE TOO SCARED TO EVEN SLEEP AT NIGHT.
THEY SAY YOU CAN'T FIGHT A WAR WITH NO ENEMIES. WHEN O' WHEN WILL THAT CAO CAO COME?
ARE THOSE CROWS OR SOLDIERS UP ON THE WALLS? THEY TOLD ME IT'S LITTLE OL' CAO HONG AND XU HUANG. TO THAT I SAY, "WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?"
NGHH...








JUST IGNORE HIM. EVEN MAKING FUN OF HIM IS BORING NOW.

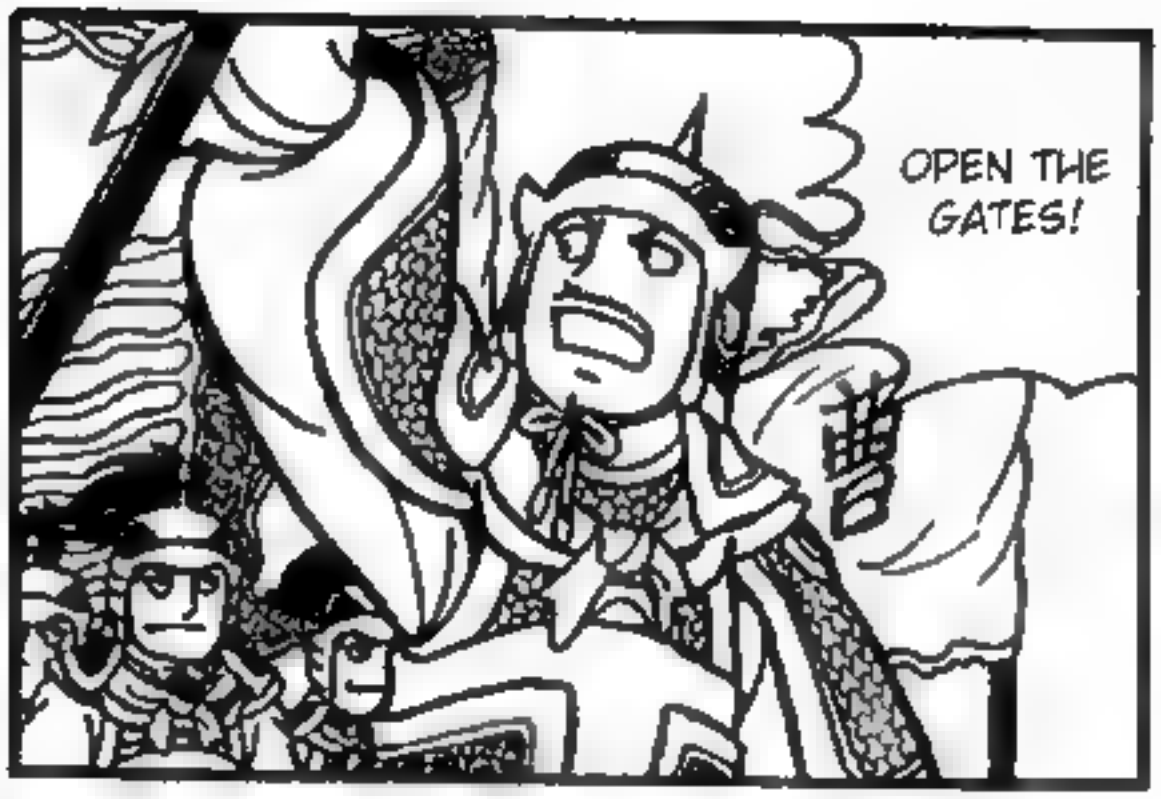

HEY, HE'S BACK AGAIN.

ZZZ...

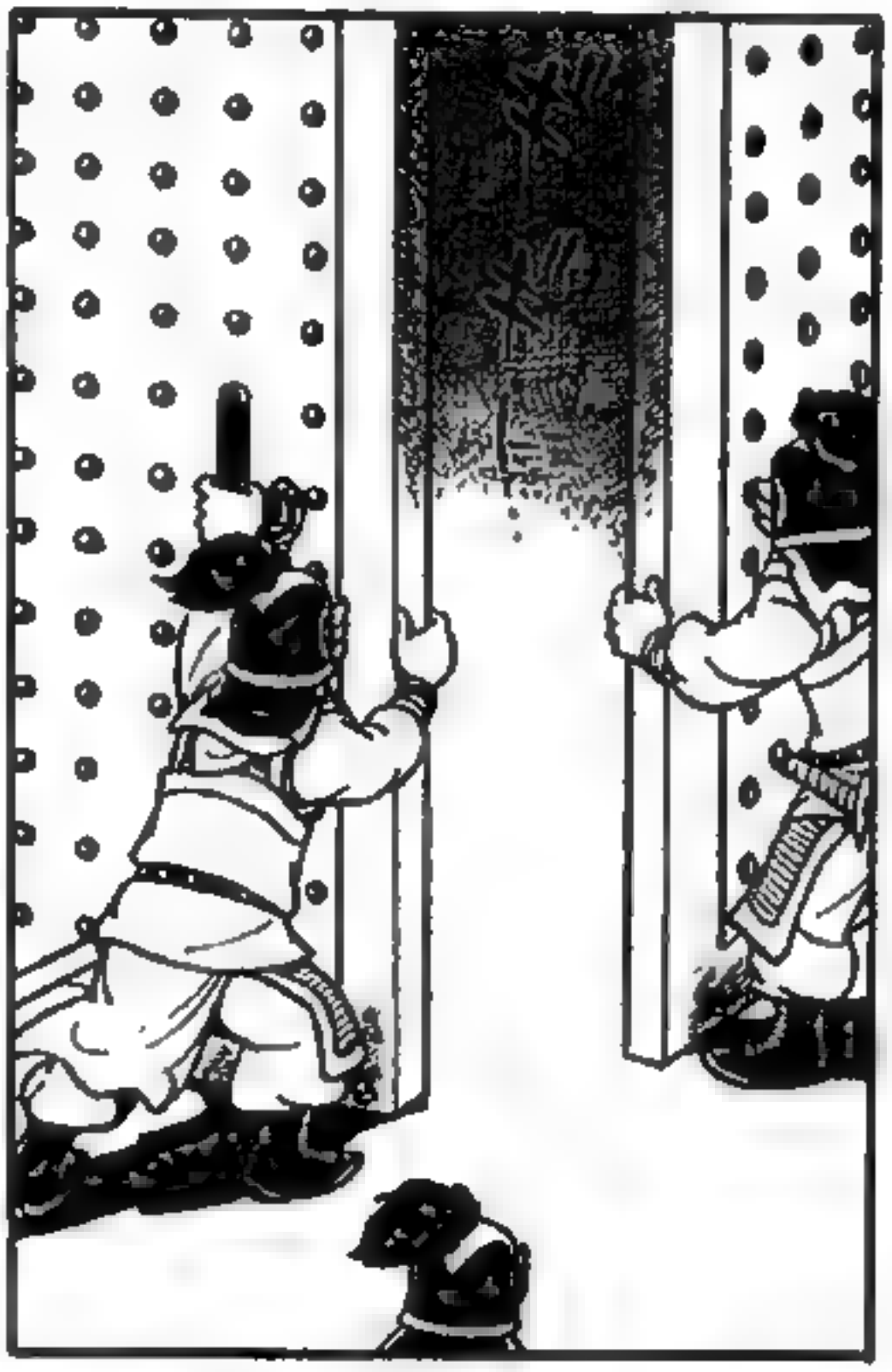
I'LL GIVE THEM A THRASHING THEY'LL NEVER FORGET...

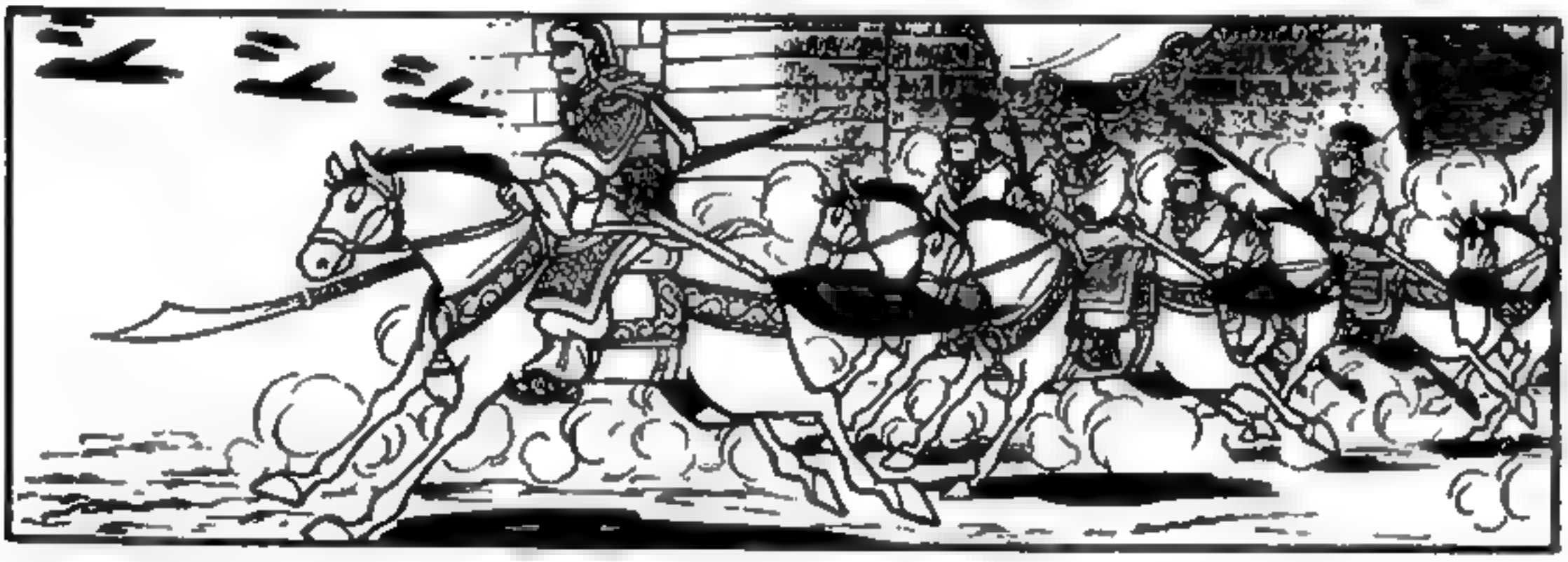
I... I CAN'T BEAR THIS ANYMORE...

WE SHALL HEREBY SALLY FORTH FROM THE CASTLE TO KILL THE ENEMIES!


OPEN THE GATES!

FOLLOW MY LEAD!





AH!

HM?

I HOPE YOU'VE HAD FUN INSULTING ME BECAUSE IT'S THE LAST THING YOU'LL EVER DO!

AGHH!
FLEEING ALREADY? WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL THAT BOASTING EARLIER!?

WHAT!?

SIR! GENERAL CAO HONG JUST LEFT THE CASTLE FOR AN ATTACK!

EVERYONE, FOLLOW ME!

HE'S FALLING RIGHT INTO THEIR TRAP! WE HAVE TO CALL HIM BACK AT ONCE!

HMPH, ALL TALK AND NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT.

THE ENEMIES MAY HAVE AMBUSHES SET UP AHEAD. WE MUST NOT VENTURE ANY FARTHER THAN THIS.

AH, SO YOU'VE COME, XU HUANG.

CAO HONG! WE MUST RETURN TO THE CASTLE AT ONCE!

DON'T WORRY, I JUST GAVE THEM A GOOD BEATING, THAT'S ALL.

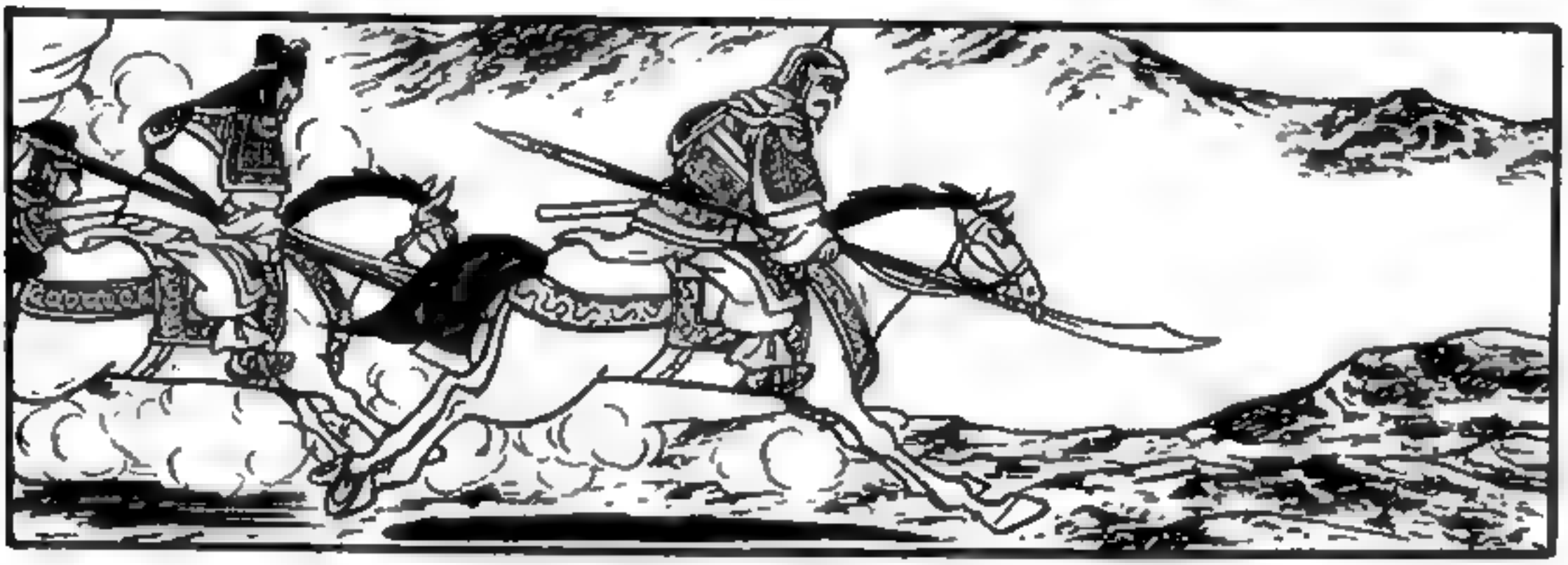
IT IS I, MA DAI OF XILIANG!

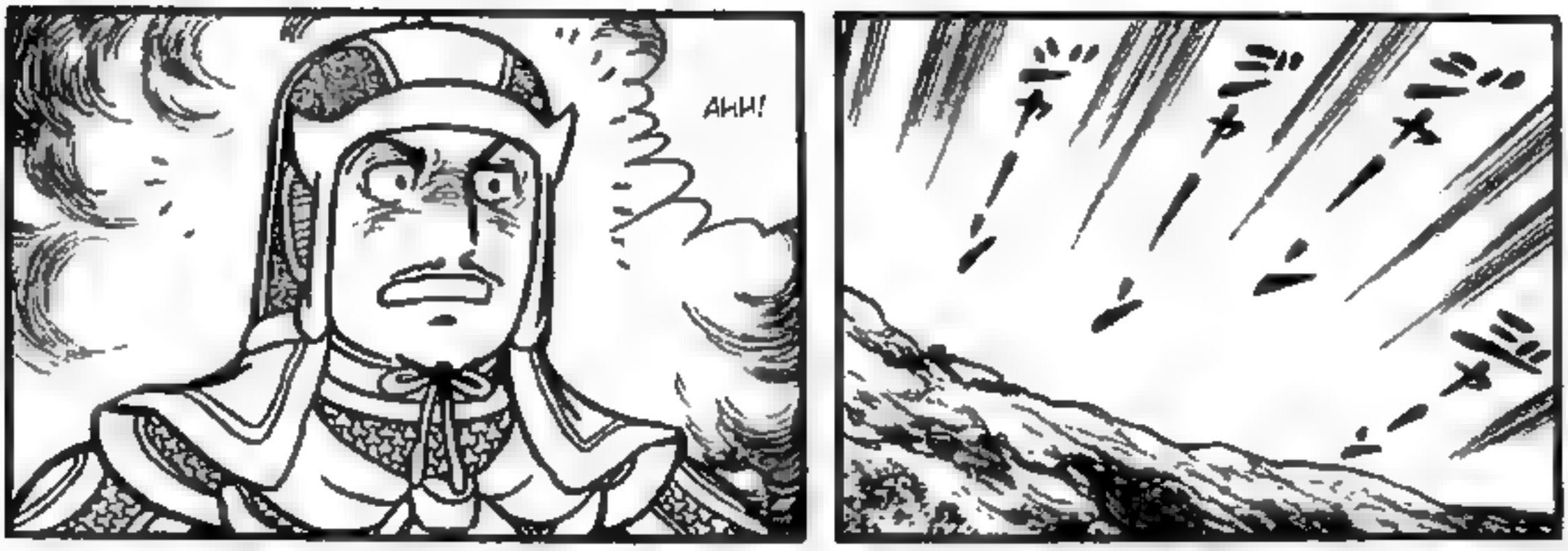
AH!

HM?

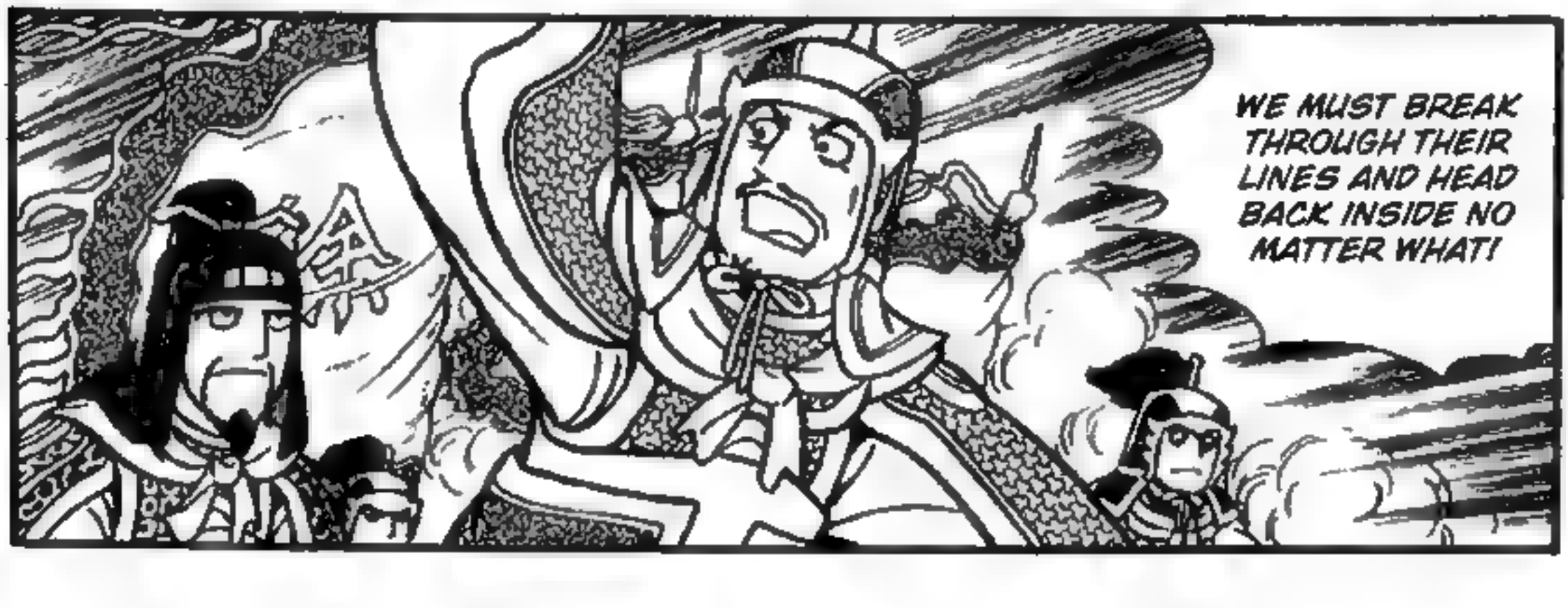
RIGHT.
THE ENEMIES OUTNUMBER US VASTLY. WE MUST HURRY BACK.

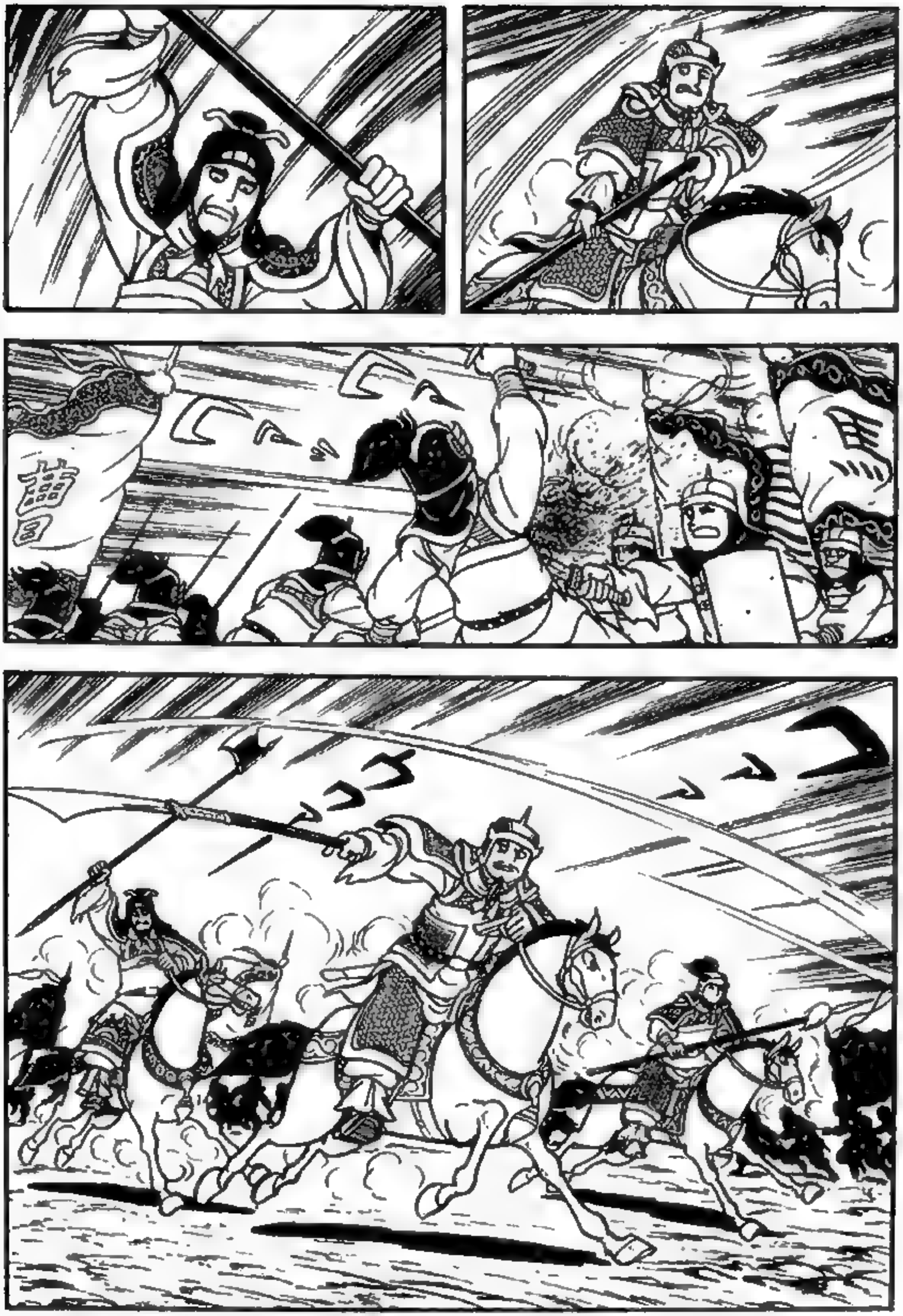
JUST AS I THOUGHT...




AHH!

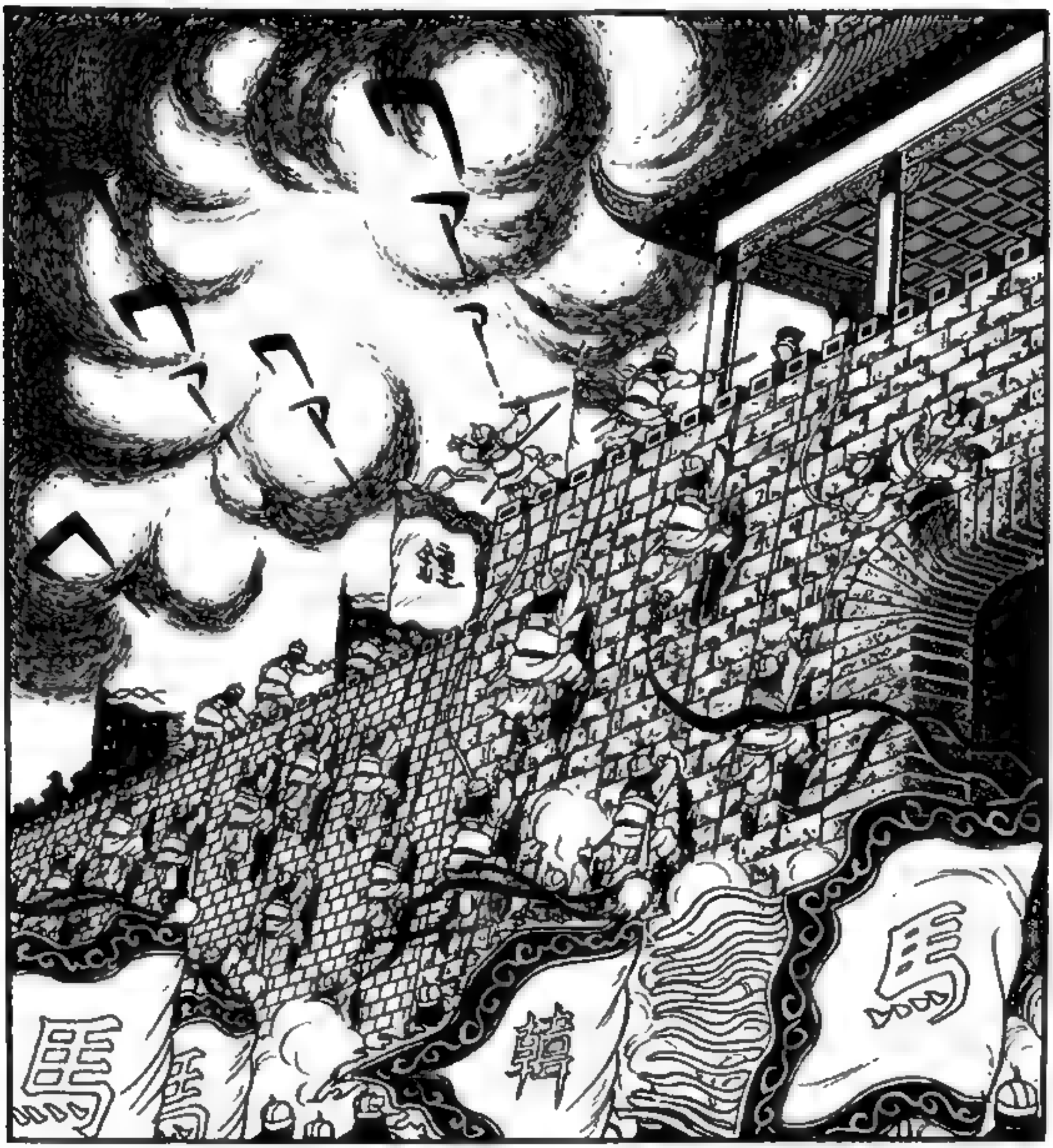
I, PANG DE, AM HERE TO TAKE YOUR HEADS!


WE MUST BREAK THROUGH THEIR LINES AND HEAD BACK INSIDE NO MATTER WHAT!



AHH!

AH!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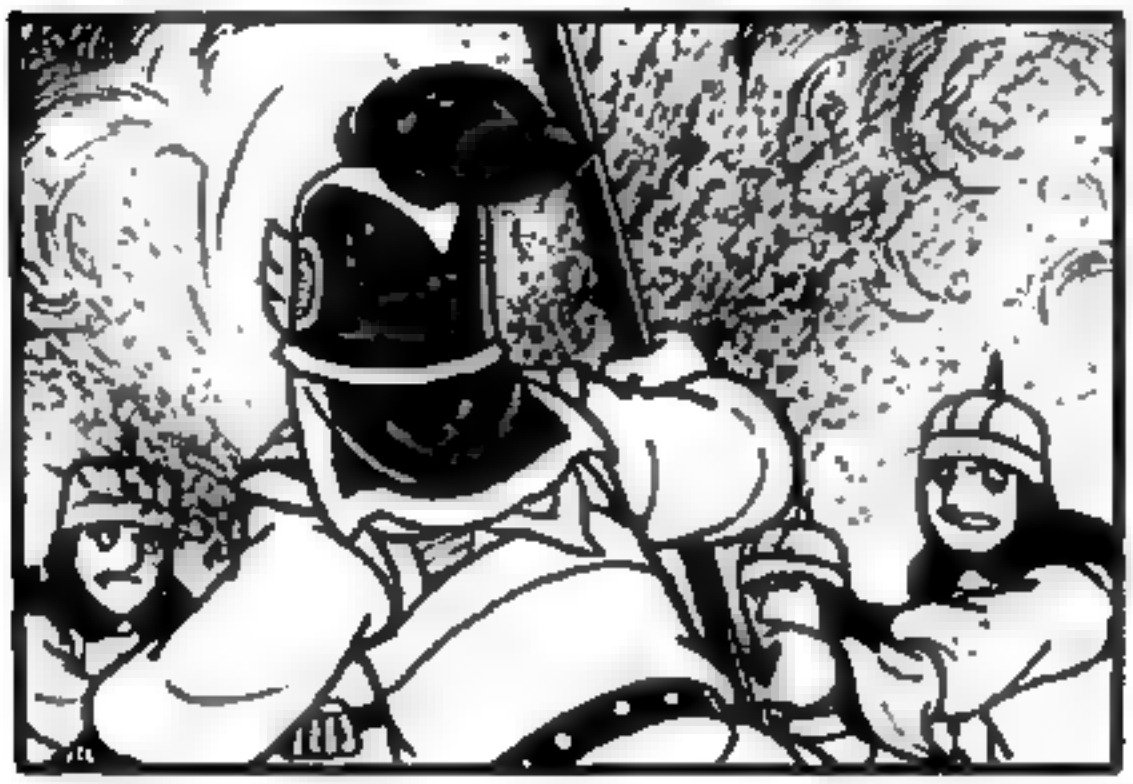
THE CHANCELLOR SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT OUR MAIN ARMY TO SOMEWHERE NEAR HERE BY NOW. WE MUST REGROUP THERE FOR THE TIME BEING.

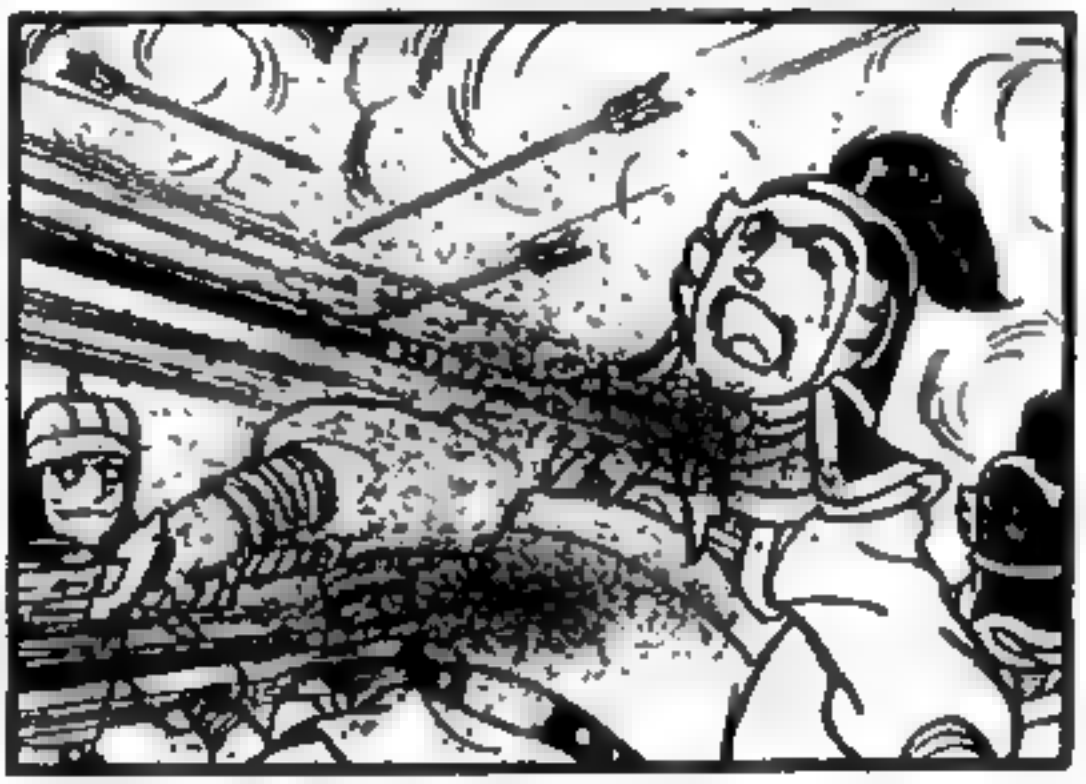
CAO HONG, TONG PASS IS ALREADY AS GOOD AS CAPTURED...

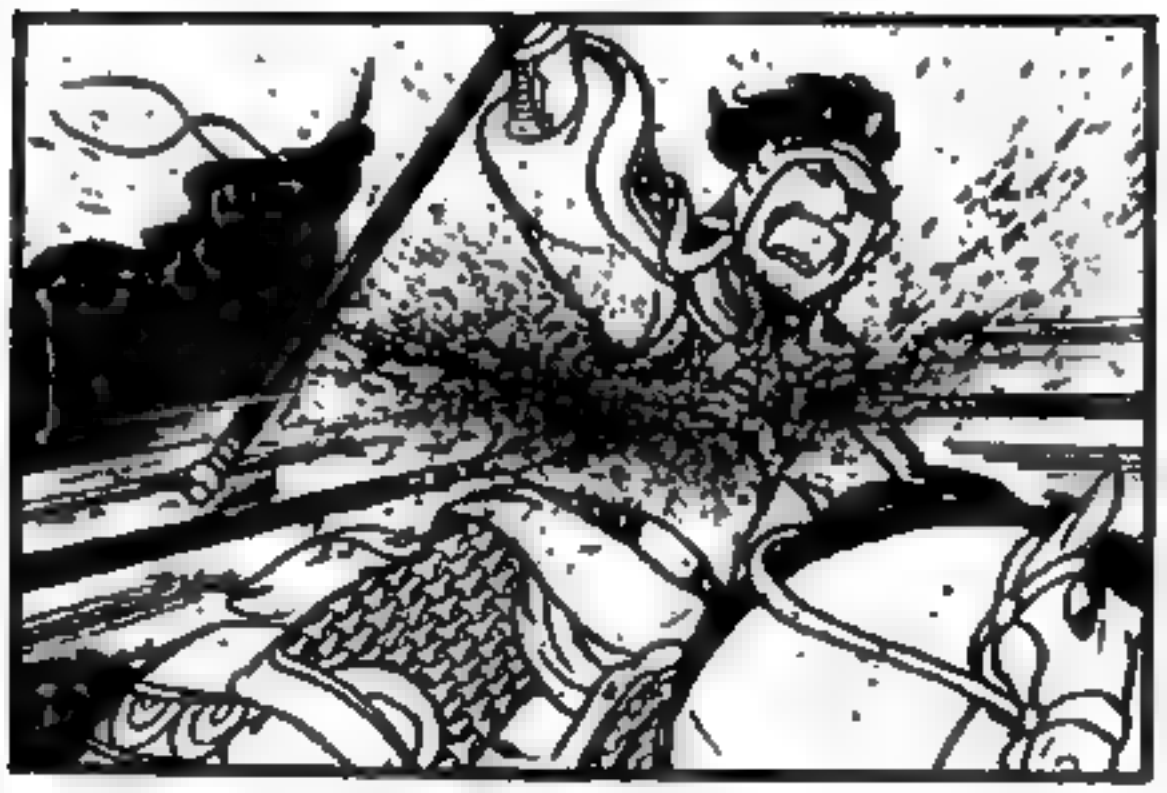
FOLLOW ME!

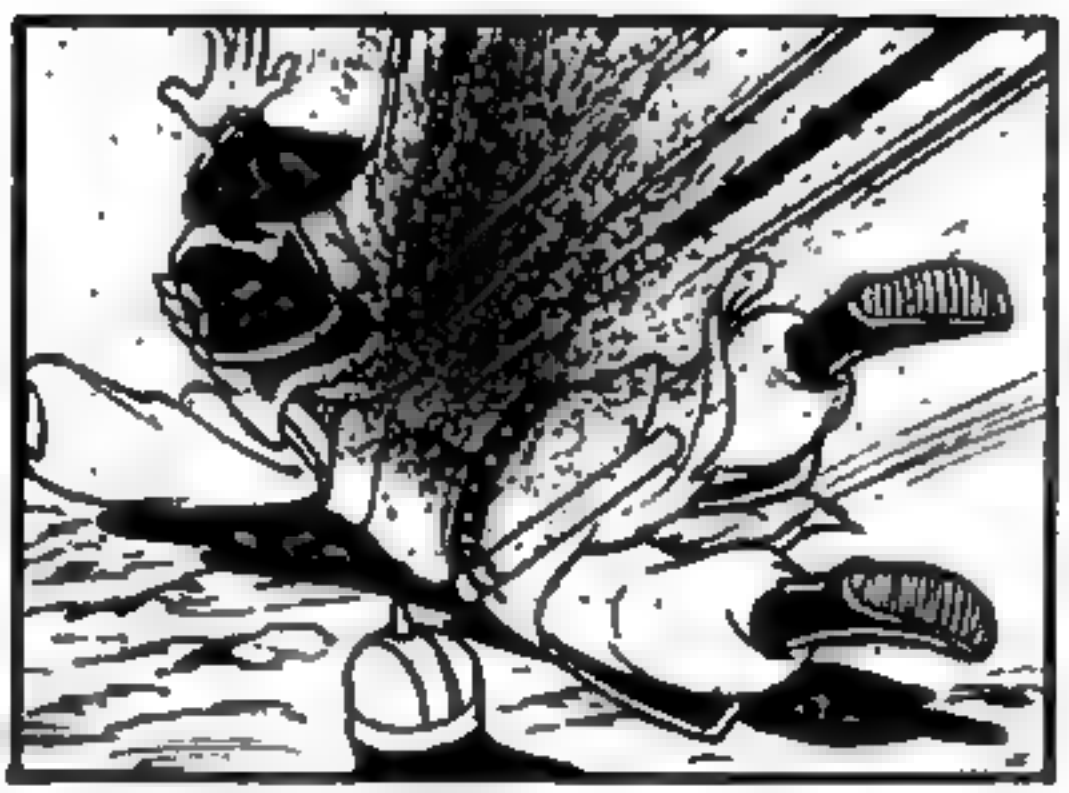
YES, WE HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE...

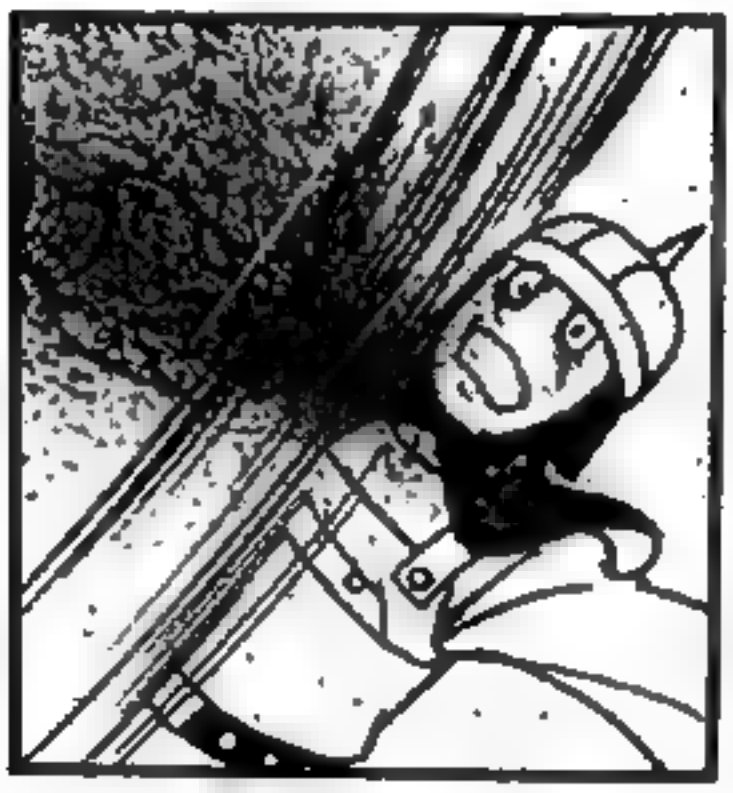
DON'T LET THEM ESCAPE!











DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, GO ON AHEAD IF YOU CAN!
XU HUANG! ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?
GET OUT OF MY WAY!

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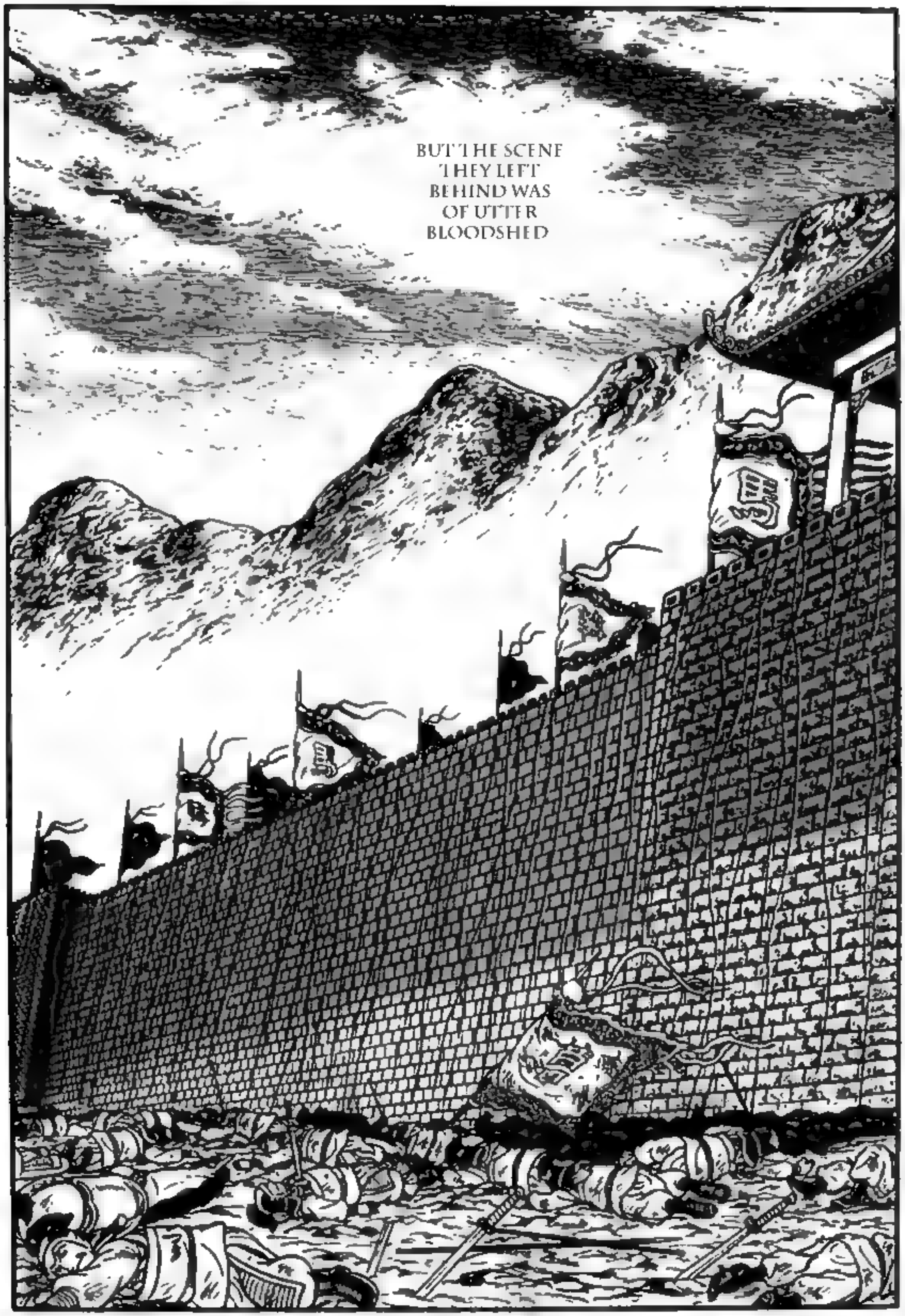
AFTER MUCH DESPERATION, CAO HONG AND XU HUANG ESCAPED SAFELY.


BUT THE SCENE
THEY LEFT
BEHIND WAS
OF UTTER
BLOODSHED

FRONTAL CLASH

IS THAT CAO HONG AND XU HUANG?

I REGRET TO INFORM MY CHANCELLOR THAT TONG PASS HAS FALLEN TO ENEMY HANDS.

CAO HONG, XU HUANG. WHAT HAPPENED?

WHAT!?

YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU! COULDN'T EVEN HOLD OUT FOR 10 DAYS!?

WELL... THEY...

TELL ME, THEN, HOW THEY MANAGED TO CAPTURE TONG PASS SO QUICKLY.

...THE XILIANG SOLDIERS TAUNTED CAO HONG DAY AFTER DAY, MY LORD.

SPEAK UP! ONE MUST KNOW ONE'S ENEMIES BEFORE FIGHTING. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU TELL ME EVERY-THING IN FULL DETAIL.

HIS PATIENCE SNAPPED AND HE SALLIED FORTH OUTSIDE.

THOUGH CAO HONG DID HIS BEST TO ENDURE IT, WHEN AT LAST, HE SAW THE ENEMIES SLEEPING BEFORE OUR WALLS...

HE ***WHAT!?***

NO SIR, I HAD KNOWN ALL ALONG.

XU HUANG! DID YOU ALSO NOT REALIZE THAT WAS THE ENEMY'S PLAN!?

THEN WHY DID YOU NOT STOP CAO HONG!?

AS SOON AS I HAD HEARD WHAT HE DID, I CHASED AFTER HIM AS QUICKLY AS I COULD TO WARN HIM OF THE DANGER.

I WAS IN THE GRANARY CHECKING HOW MUCH FOOD THERE WAS STILL LEFT WHEN CAO HONG TOOK ACTION.

HOWEVER, BY THE TIME I CAUGHT UP TO HIM, WE HAD BEEN SURROUNDED ON ALL 4 SIDES AND THE EMPTY TONG PASS WAS CAPTURED SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

CAO HONG! BY DISOBEYING MY ORDERS NOT TO ATTACK, YOU HAVE COST US NOT ONLY TONG PASS BUT ALSO THE LIVES OF MANY BRAVE SOLDIERS! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW GRAVE YOUR SIN IS!?

YOU... INCOMPE-TENT FOOLS!

OFF WITH HIS HEAD!

YES, I BEG YOU TO RECON-SIDER.

CHANCELLOR, THOUGH I UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF UPHOLDING MILITARY LAW, CAO HONG IS AN ACCOMPLISHED GENERAL WHO HAS BEEN WITH US, THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

FINE, I SHALL SPARE YOUR LIFE OUT OF REMEMBERANCE OF YOUR PAST DEEDS.

MN...

LET US RESUME OUR MARCH AND SHOW THOSE HICKS THEY'RE HOPELESSLY OUT MATCHED BY RE-TAKING TONG PASS AND CHANG'AN!

YES, CHANCEL-LOR.
HOWEVER, THAT DOES NOT MEAN I HAVE FORGIVEN YOU. REDEEM YOURSELF ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

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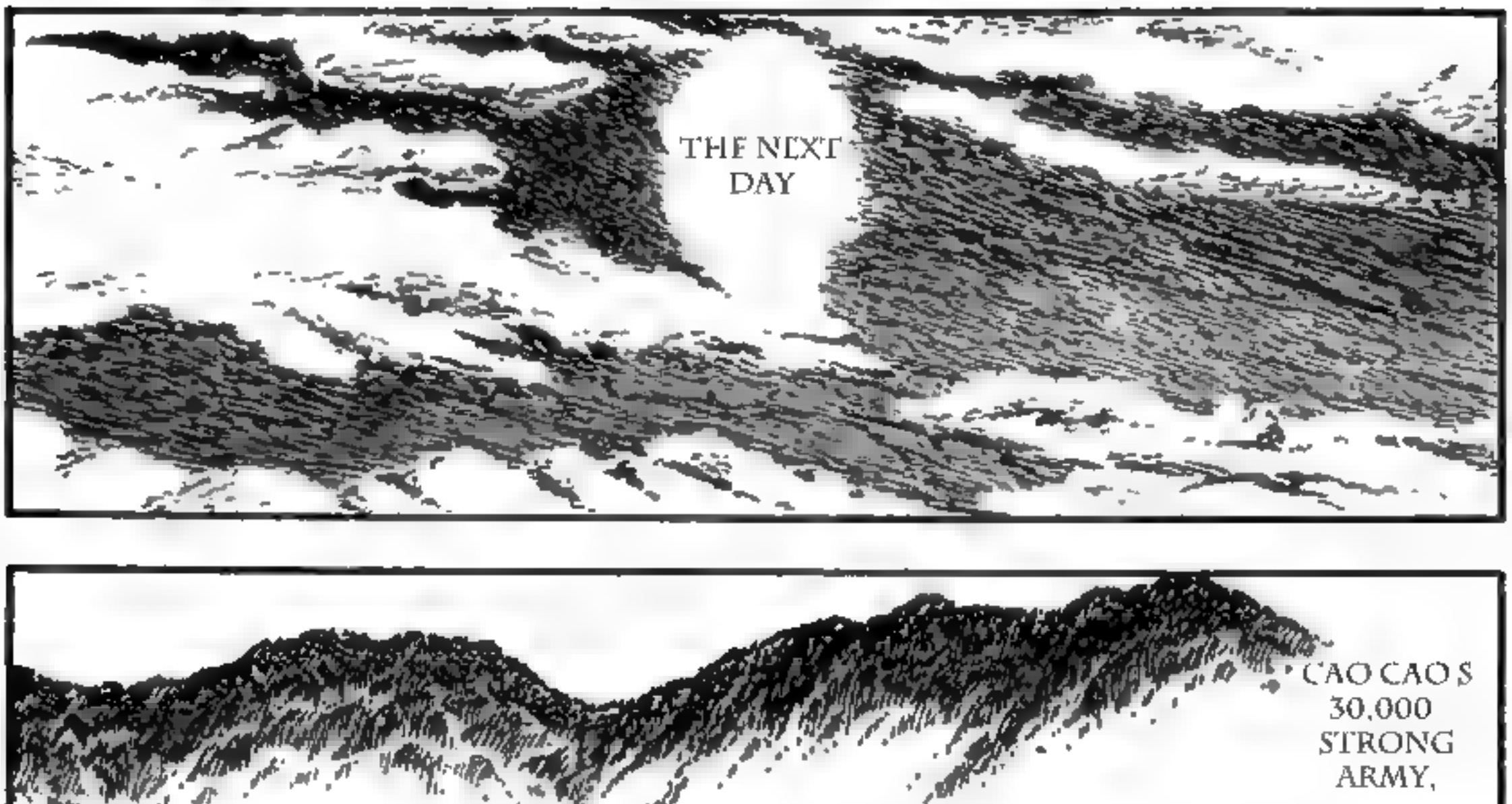

THE NEXT DAY
CAO CAO'S 30,000 STRONG ARMY,
MET THE 20,000-STRONG XILIANG ARMY JUST EAST OF TONG PASS

カッカッ

IS MA CHAO THERE!?

XILIANG HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO HAN, AS HAVE YOUR FAMILY FOR GENERATIONS! HAVE YOU FORGOT-TEN WHERE YOUR LOYALTIES LIE!?

INDEED I AM!

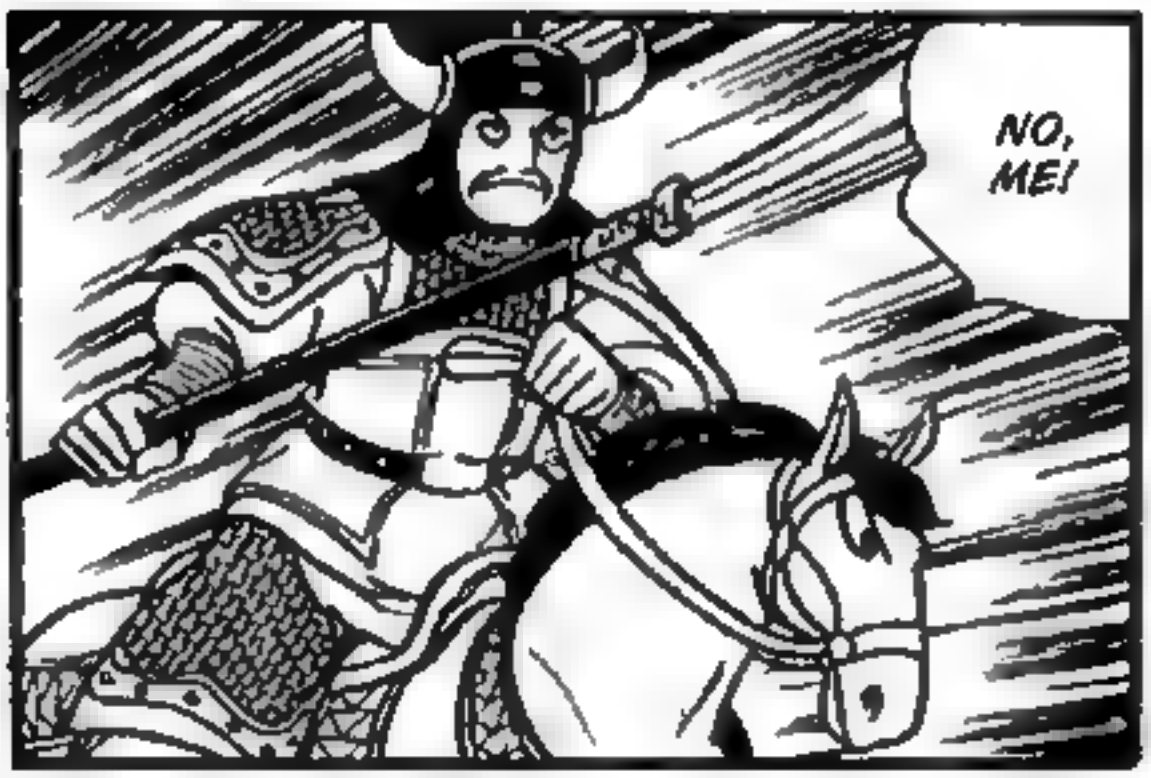
MY SOLDIERS ARE THE EMPEROR'S SOLDIERS! BY FIGHTING ME, YOU WILL BE BRANDED AS A SHAMELESS REBEL!

NO, I HAVE NOT! BUT I ALSO HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THAT THE IMPERIAL COURT OF HAN HAS BEEN USURPED BY A FIEND!

NGHH... THAT BOY HAS GOT QUITE THE TONGUE...!

HA! POMPOUS TALK COMING FROM THE TRUE REBEL! AND WHO DARE CALLS ME SHAMELESS WHEN I ONLY ACT TO AVENGE MY FATHER AND BROTHER, WHO WERE SLAIN DESPITE THEIR INNOCENCE!?

TEACH THAT YOUNGSTER A LESSON!


NO, ME!

ALLOW ME, SIR!

HAHA. YOU MEN OF THE CAPITAL WHO DRINK AND LIE WITH WHORES ALL DAY THINK YOU CAN BEST ME!?
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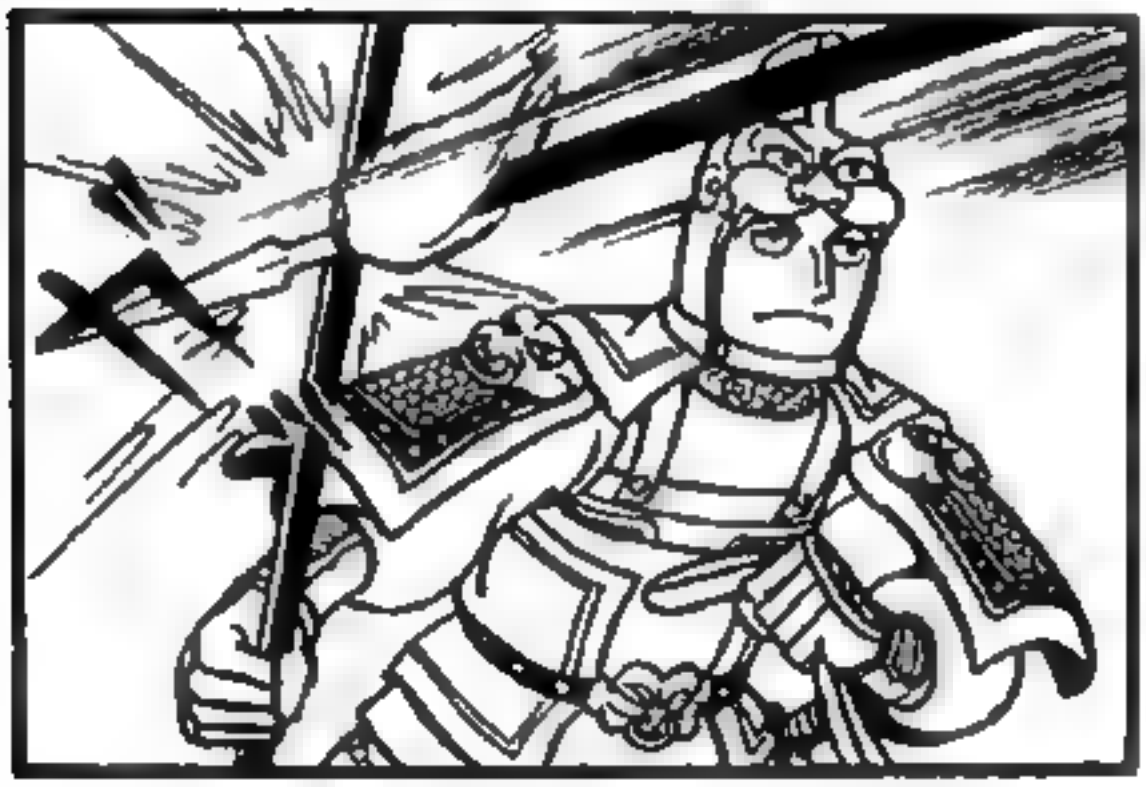
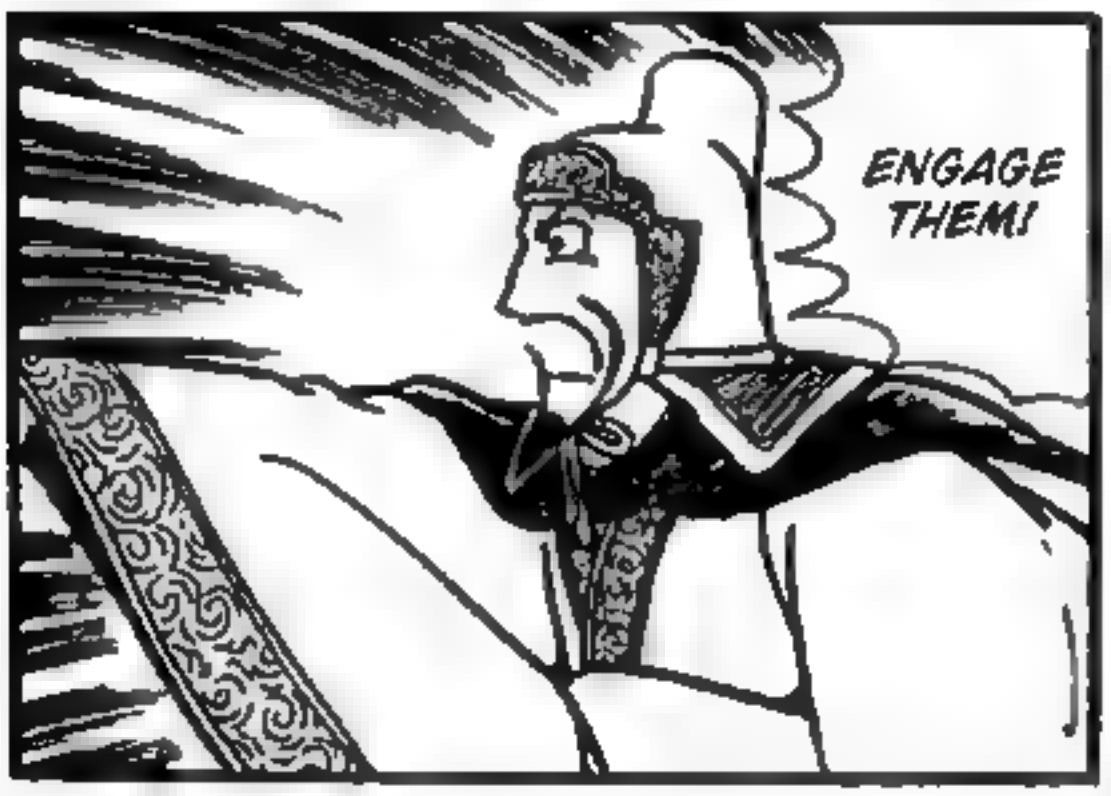
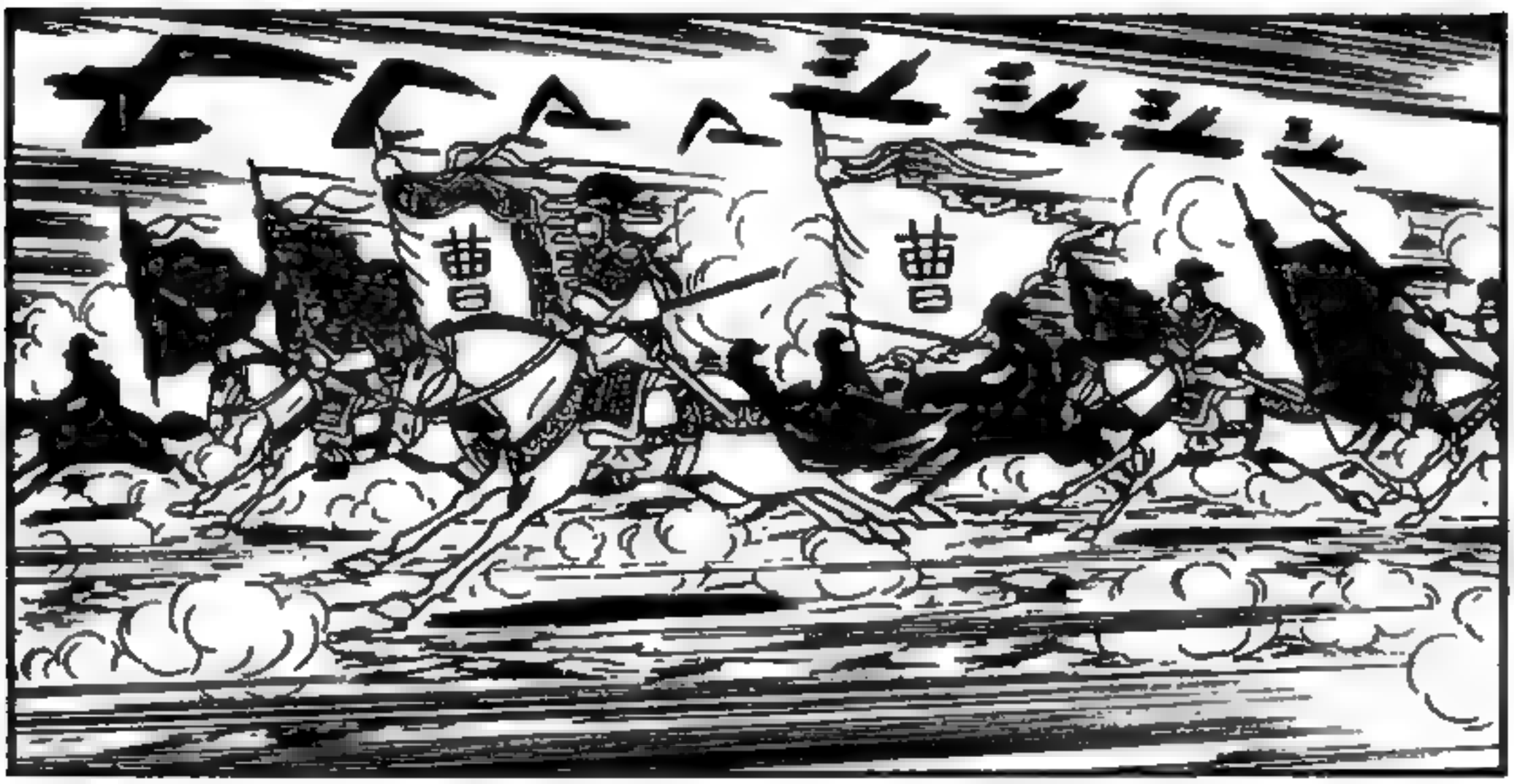



ENGAGE THEM!

NGHH...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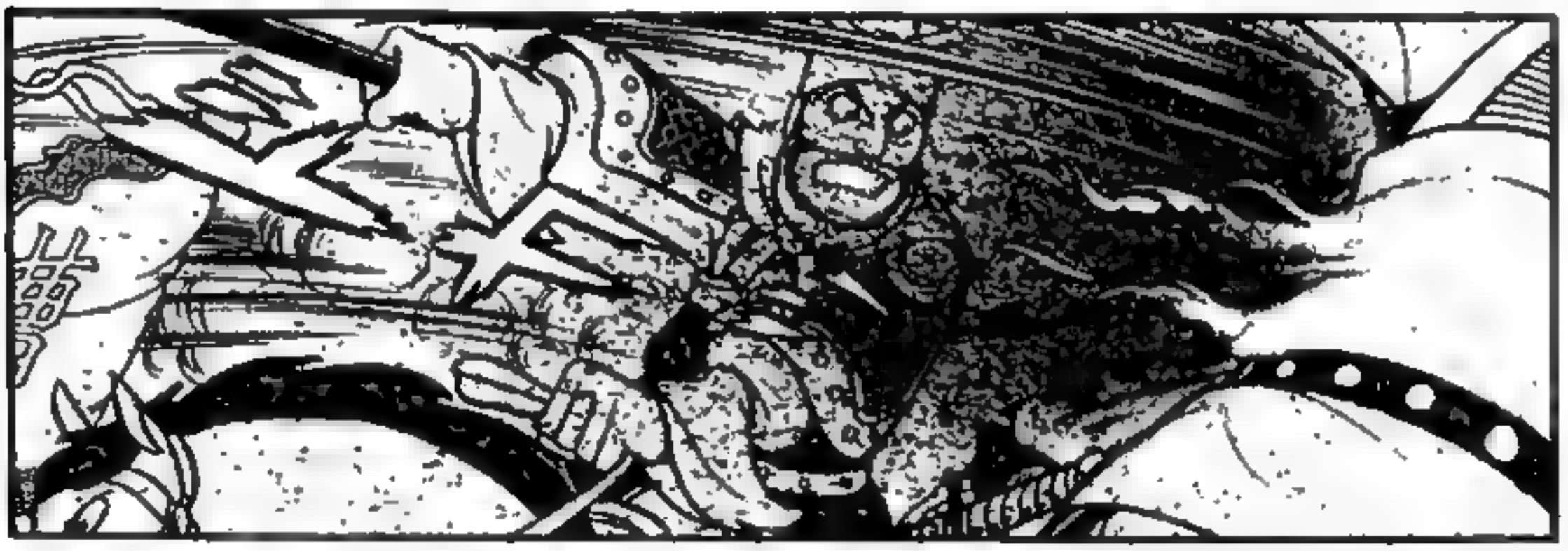

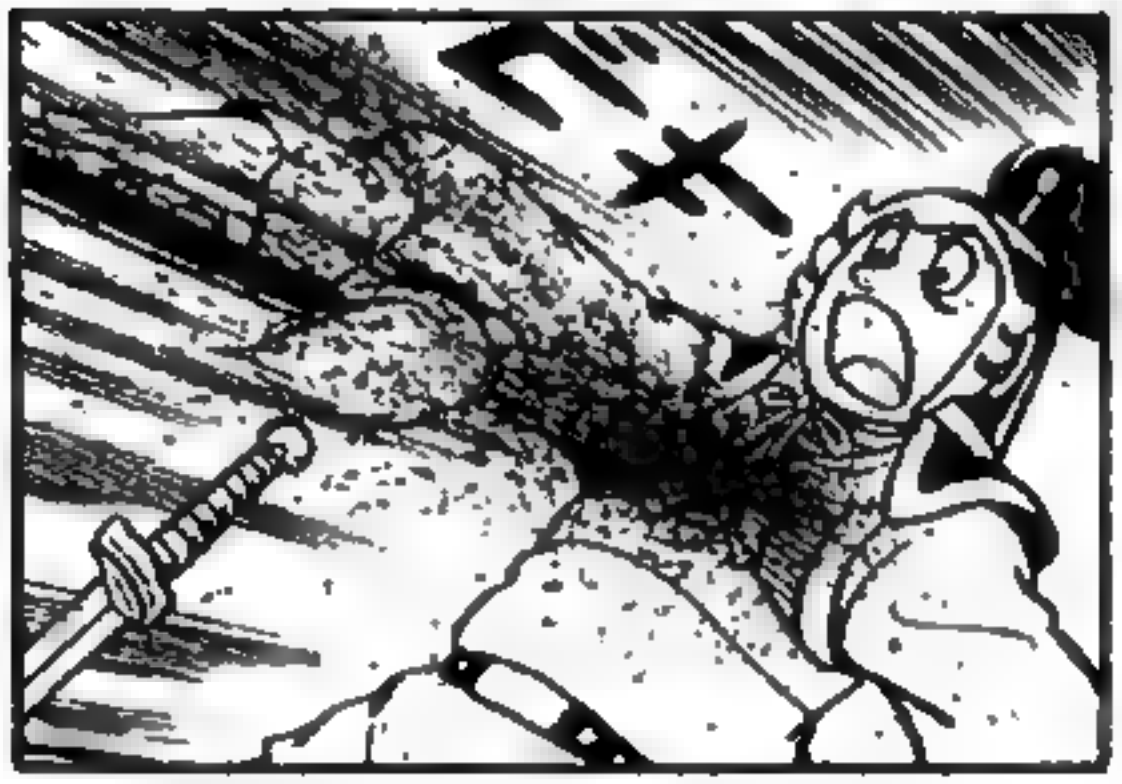
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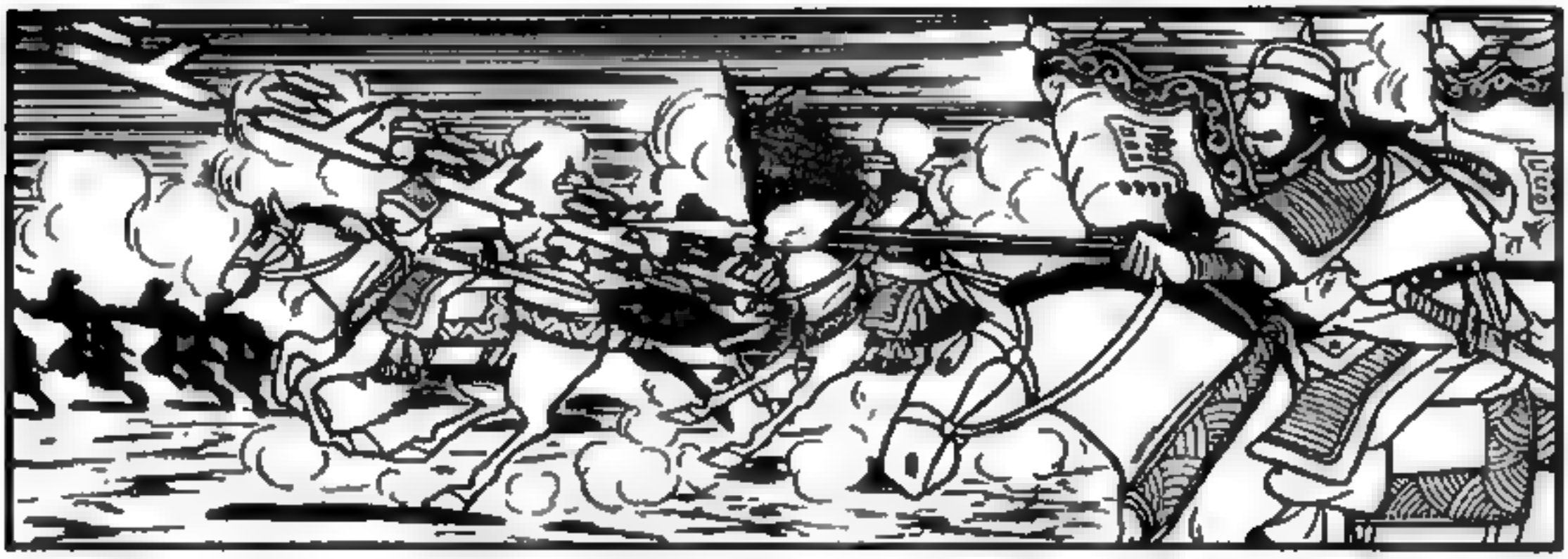
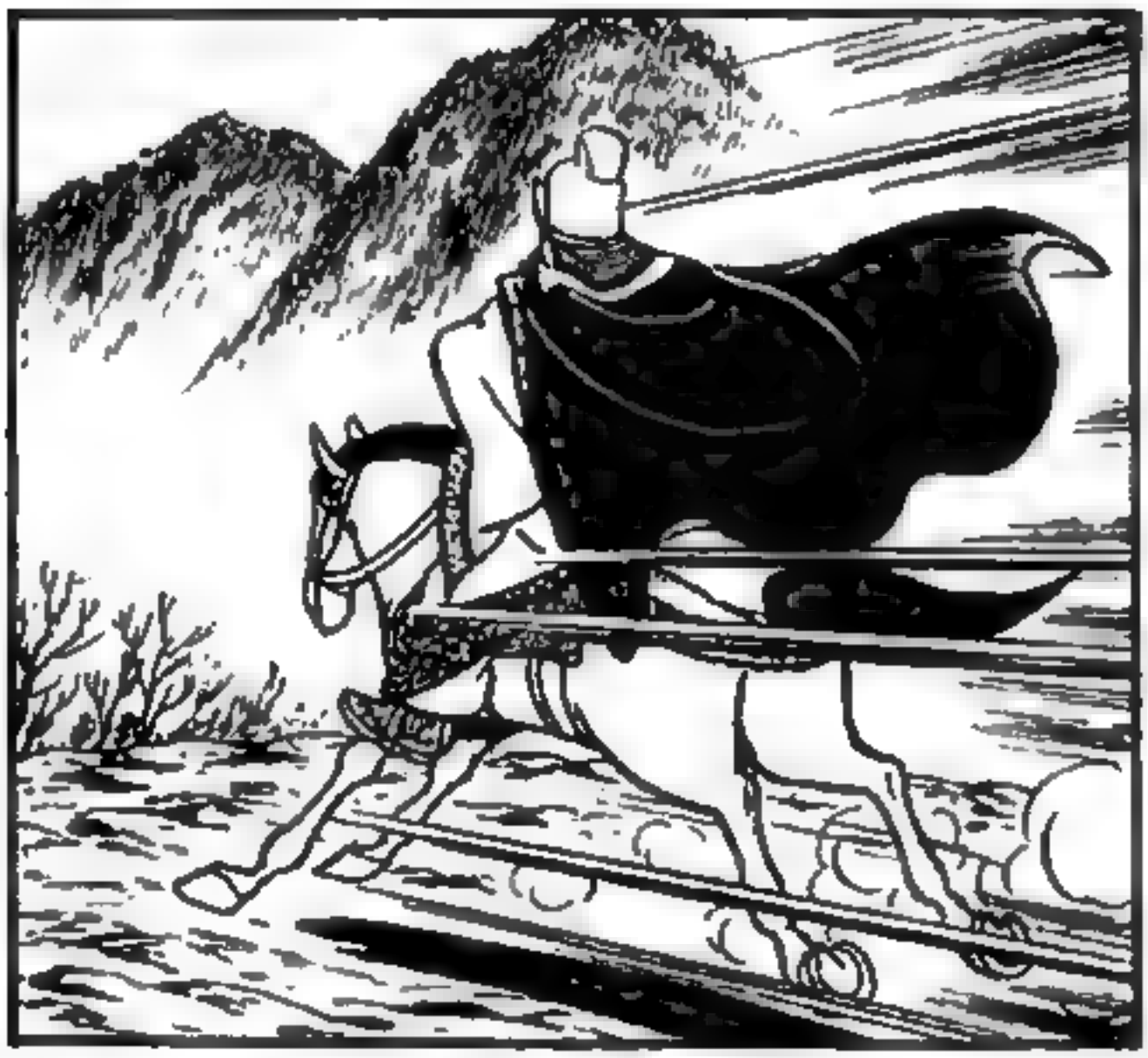
I'VE UNDERES-TIMATED THEIR STRENGTH...

MNN...

THE BATTLE SEEMS TO BE TURNING TOWARDS THE ENEMY'S FAVOUR, SIR.

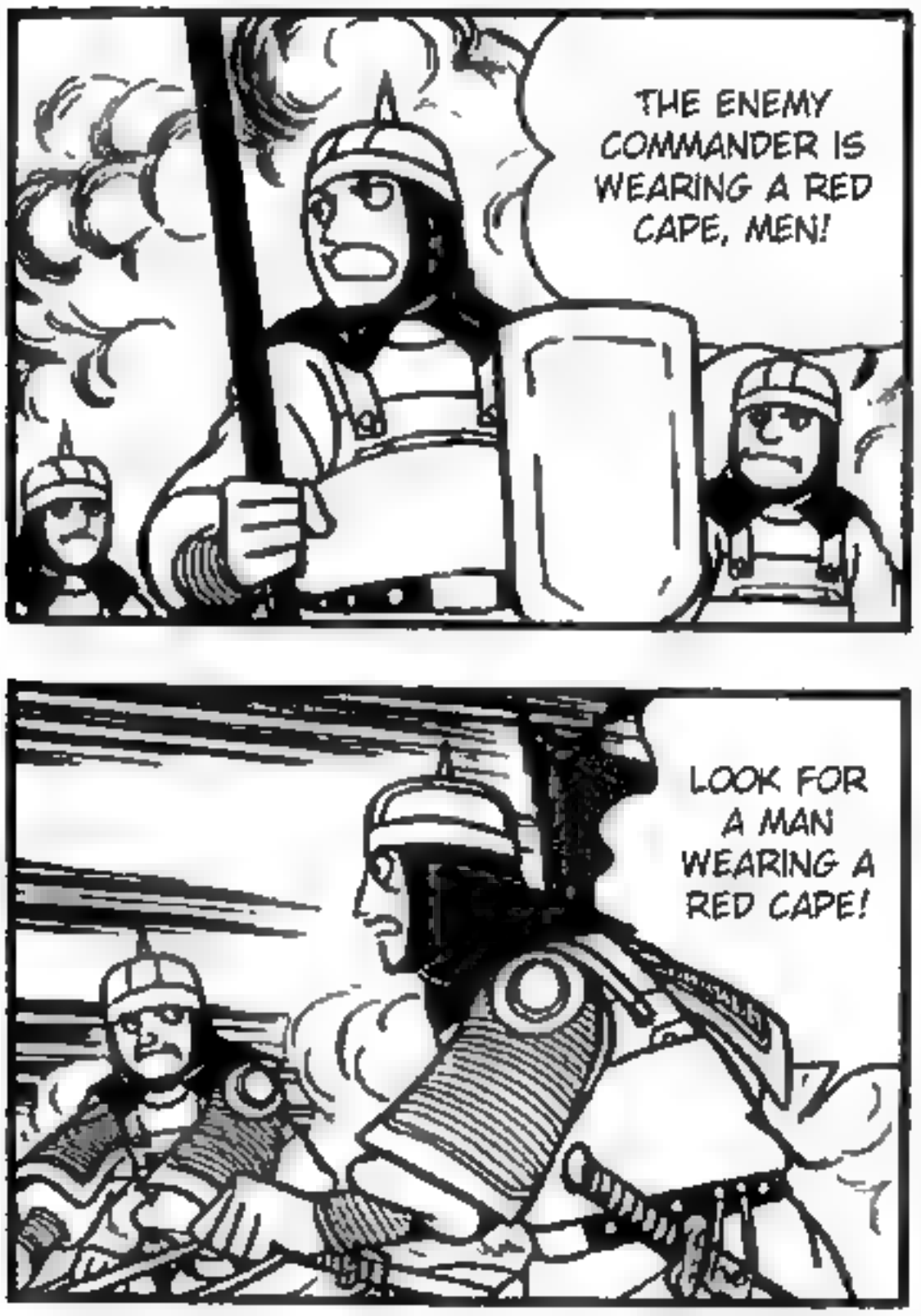
THEY'VE PENETRATED OUR CENTER, MY LORD.





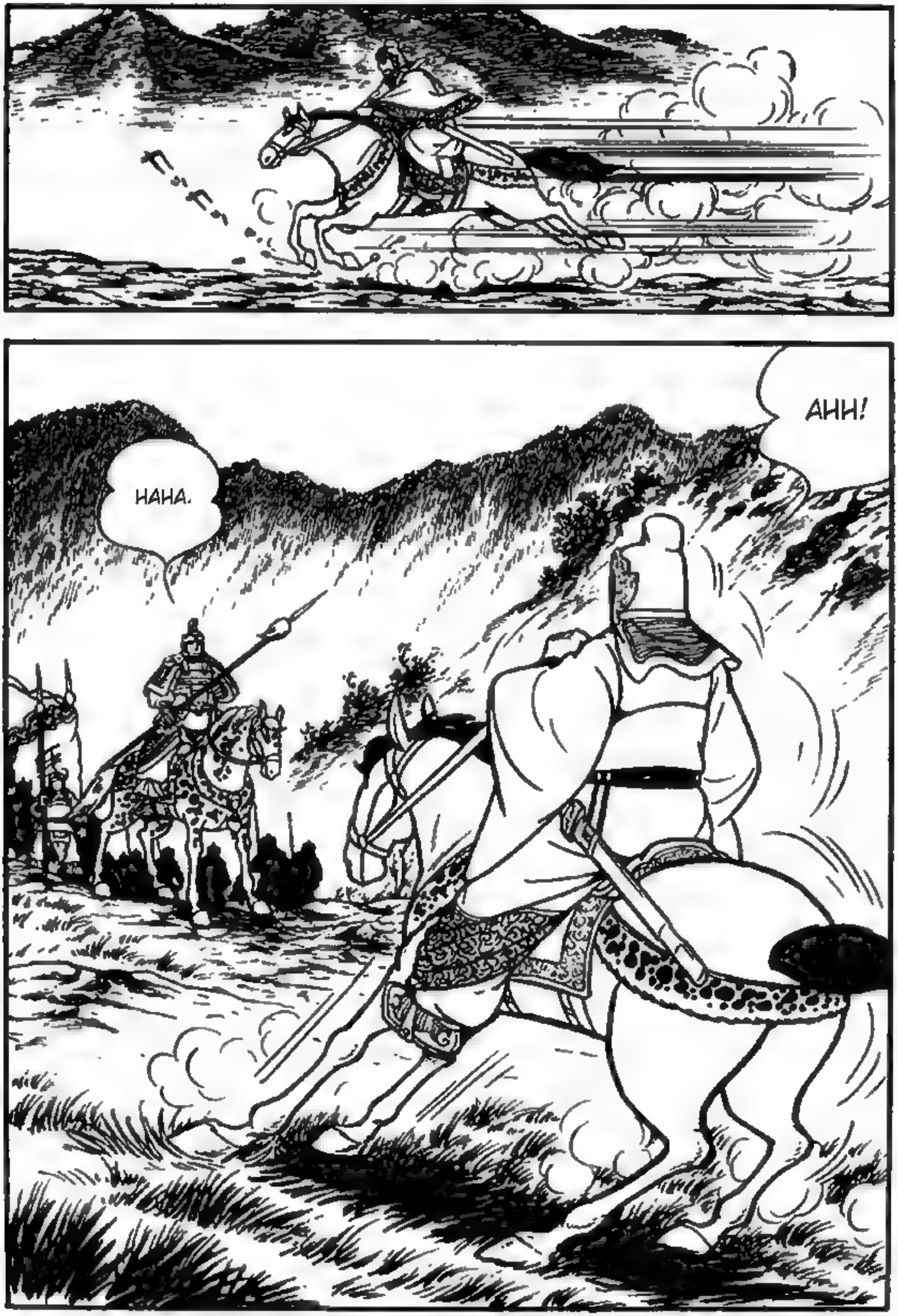
YES
IT IS TOO DANGEROUS FOR MY LORD TO REMAIN HERE. PLEASE WITHDRAW.

CAO CAO! SHOW YOURSELF!


THE ENEMY COMMANDER IS WEARING A RED CAPE, MEN!
LOOK FOR A MAN WEARING A RED CAPE!

WE MUST FIND CAO CAO! HE IS THE ONE WEARING A RED CAPE!

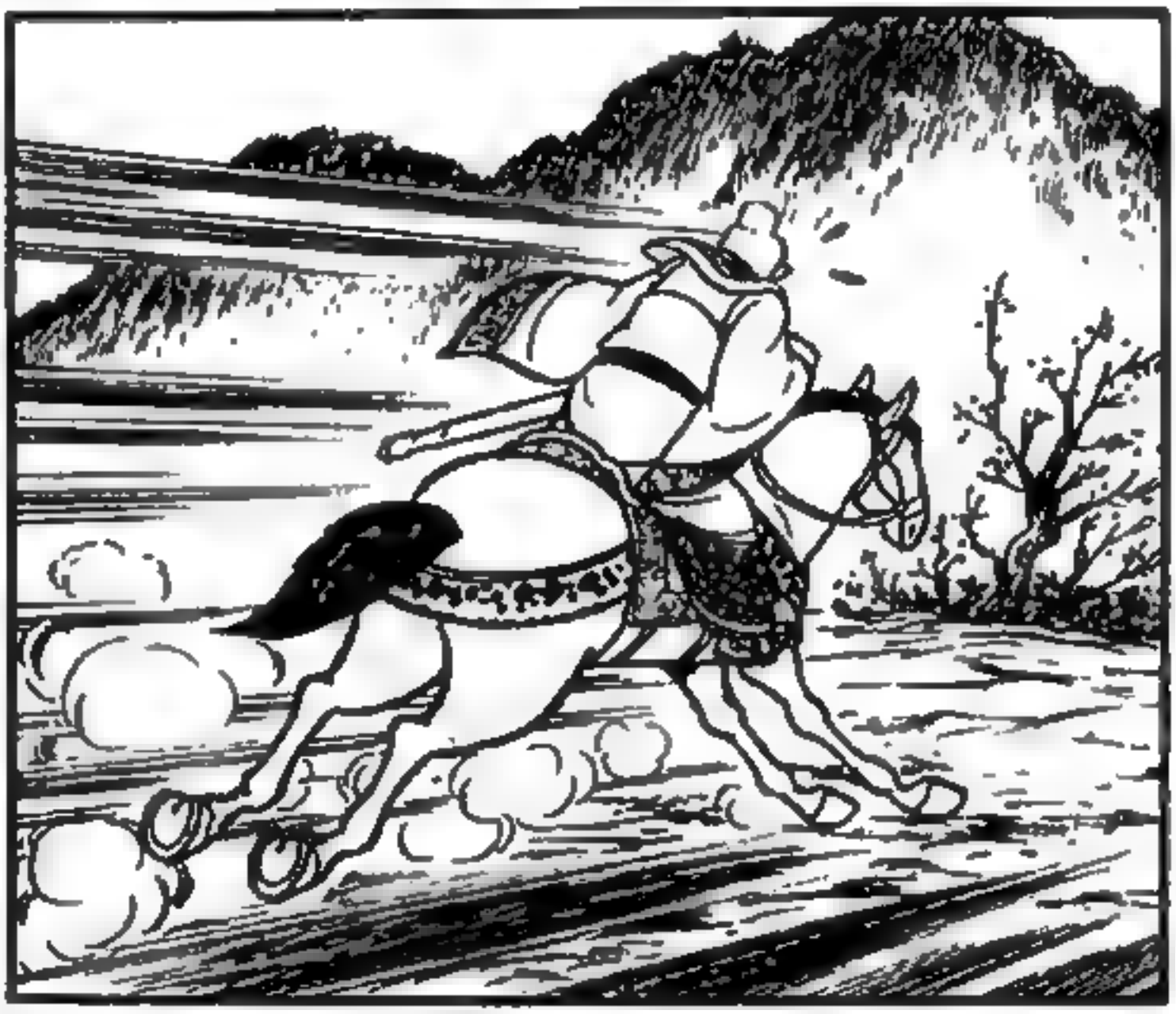
THIS ISN'T GOOD. I'LL STAND OUT TOO MUCH AT THIS RATE...


HAHA.
AHH!

AGHH!

I SEE THE HEAVENS HAVE BROUGHT YOU TO ME SO THAT I CAN AVENGE MY FATHER AND BROTHERS.

YOU CAN'T ESCAPE FROM ME!



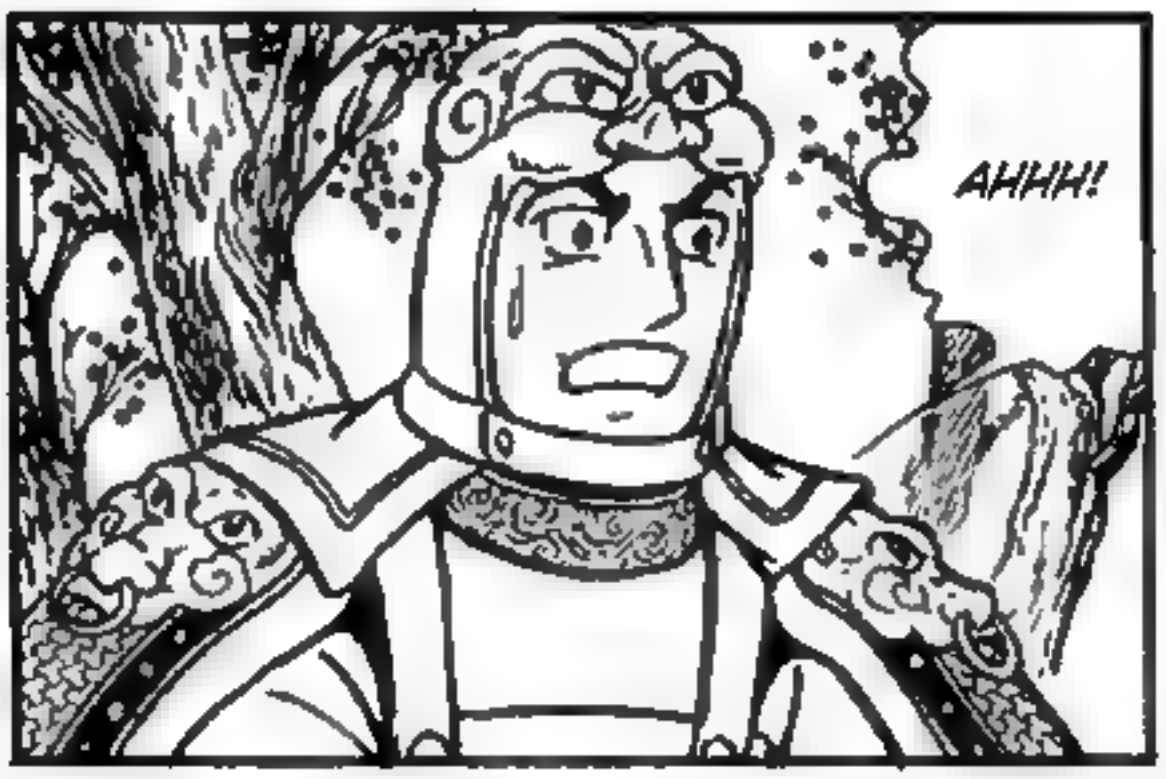
STOP RIGHT THERE!

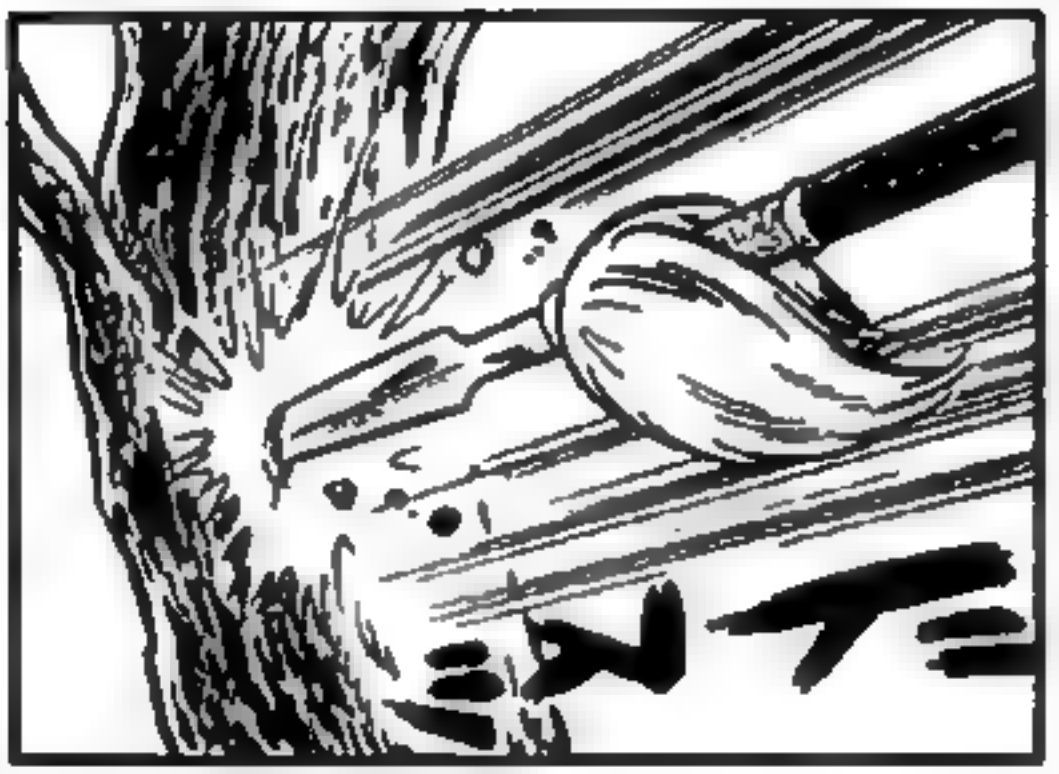
CAO CAO!

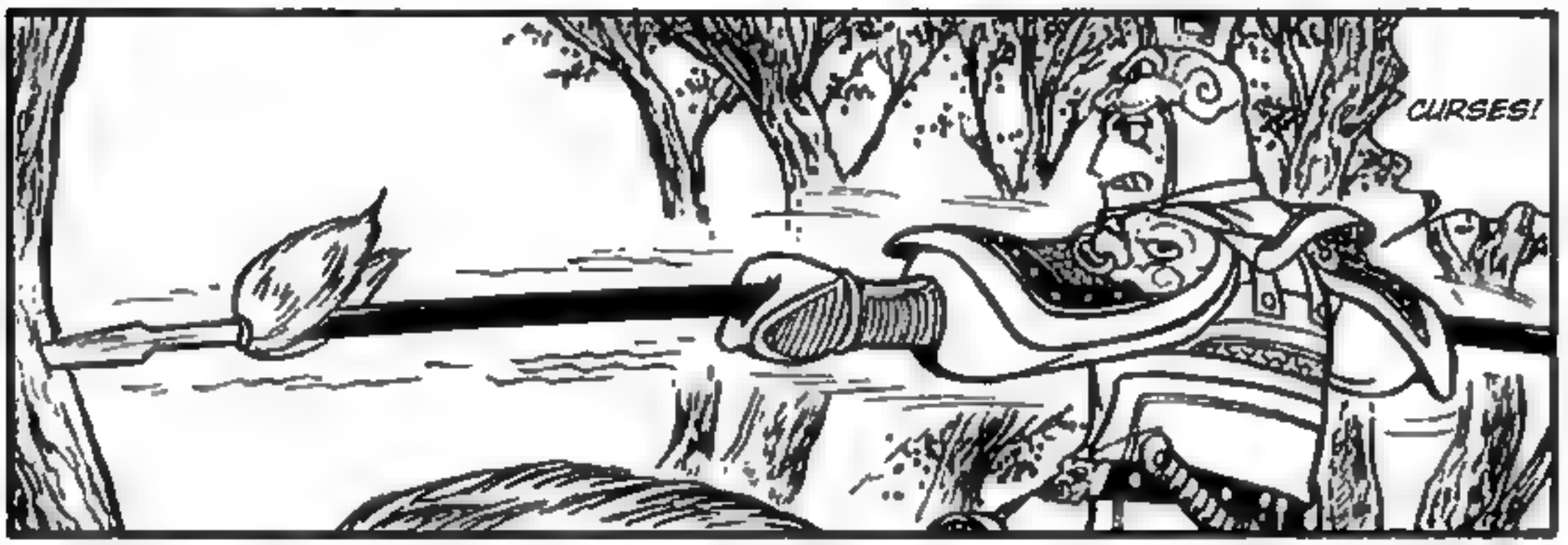
AGHH!

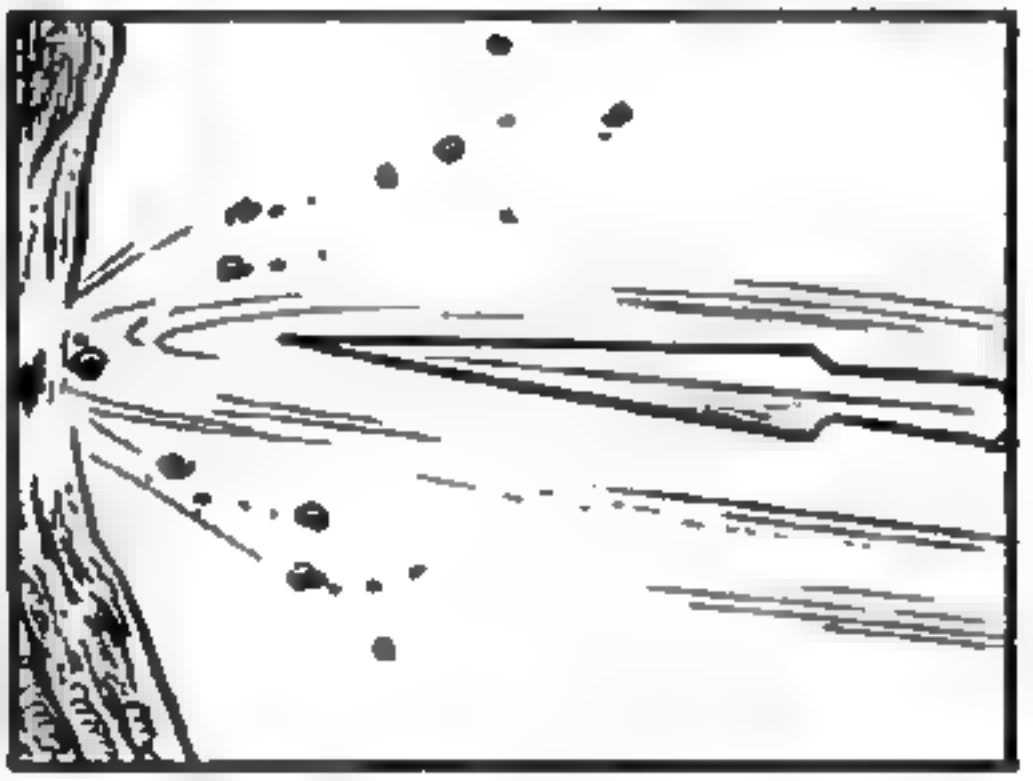
THIS IS THE END!

-126-


AHHH!

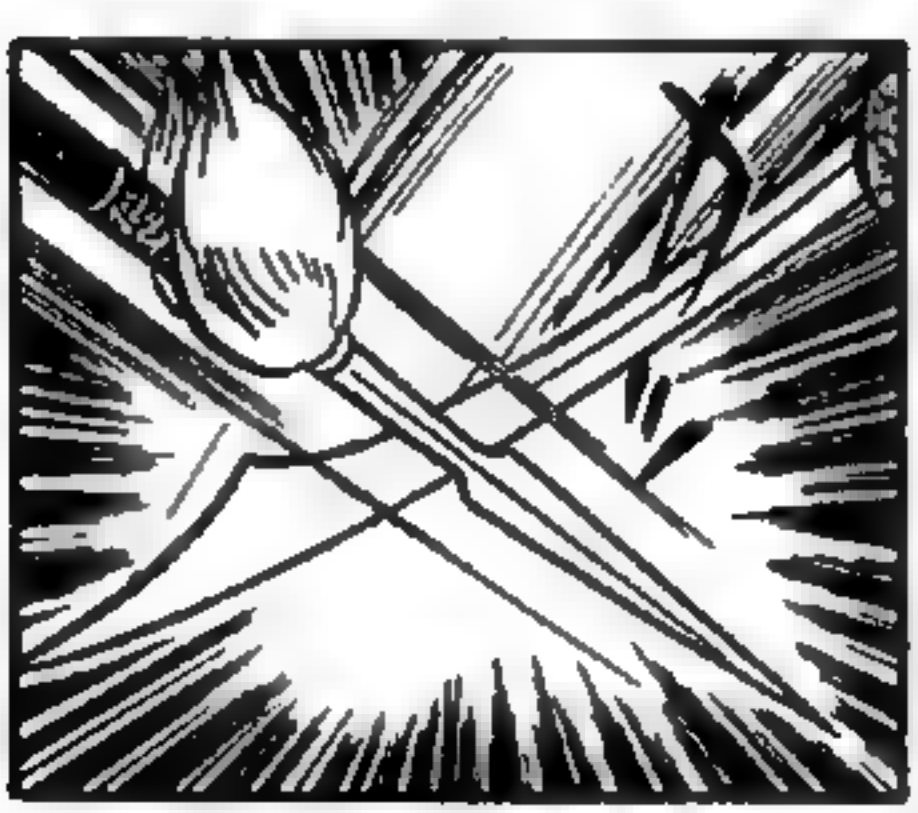



CURSES!

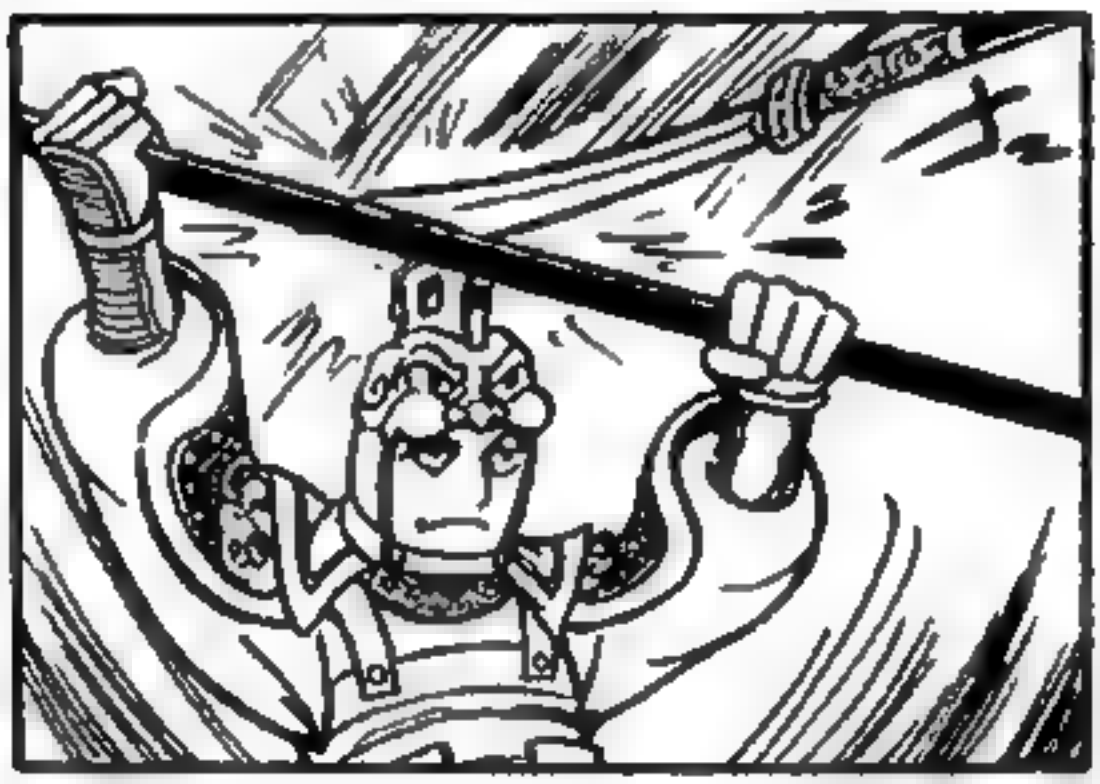


STOP RIGHT THERE, MA CHAO!

I WON'T LET YOU ESCAPE!

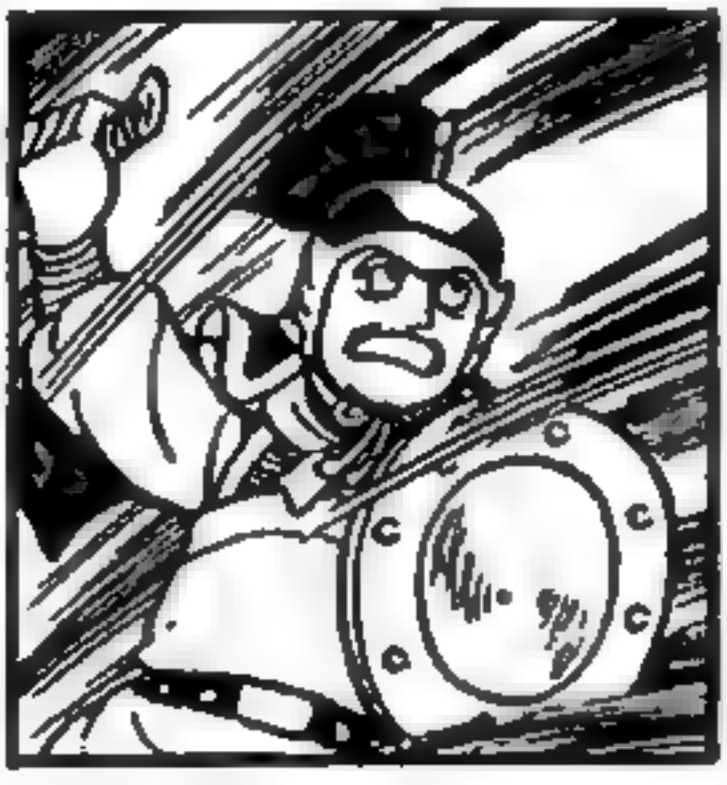


I WON'T LET YOU HARM MY LORD!



WHAT'RE YOU ALL DOING!? THIS IS THE ENEMY GENERAL! KILL HIM!

HMPH!



I SHALL WITHDRAW FOR TODAY BUT MARK MY WORDS. CAO CAO'S HEAD WILL BE MINE.

DO NOT CHASE AFTER HIM. OUR PRIORITY IS TO PROTECT THE CHANCELLOR!

ARE YOU INJURED ANYWHERE?

CHANCELLOR!

THAT WOULD BE CAO HONG, CHANCELLOR.

BY THE WAY, WHO WAS THE WARRIOR WHO HELD OFF MA CHAO FROM PURSUING ME?

NO, BUT I NEARLY LOST MY LIFE BACK THERE.

YES, SIR.

CALL HIM HERE AT ONCE.

CAO HONG?

I HEAR IT WAS YOU WHO SAVED ME FROM PERIL.

CAO HONG.

YES, CHANCELLOR?

THANKS TO YOUR BRAVERY, I'VE MANAGED TO LIVE ANOTHER DAY.

I ONLY DID WHAT A WARRIOR SHOULD DO.

IN LIGHT OF THIS, I SHALL FORGIVE YOUR RECENT FAILURE. I HOPE YOU WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE ME WELL.

THANK YOU, SIR.

WE WILL SET UP BASE USING THE WEI RIVER AS PROTECTION. LET US MAKE HASTE!

NOW THEN, IT SEEMS I'VE UNDERESTIMATED XILIANG'S ARMY. IT'S TIME I FIGHT MORE SERIOUSLY.

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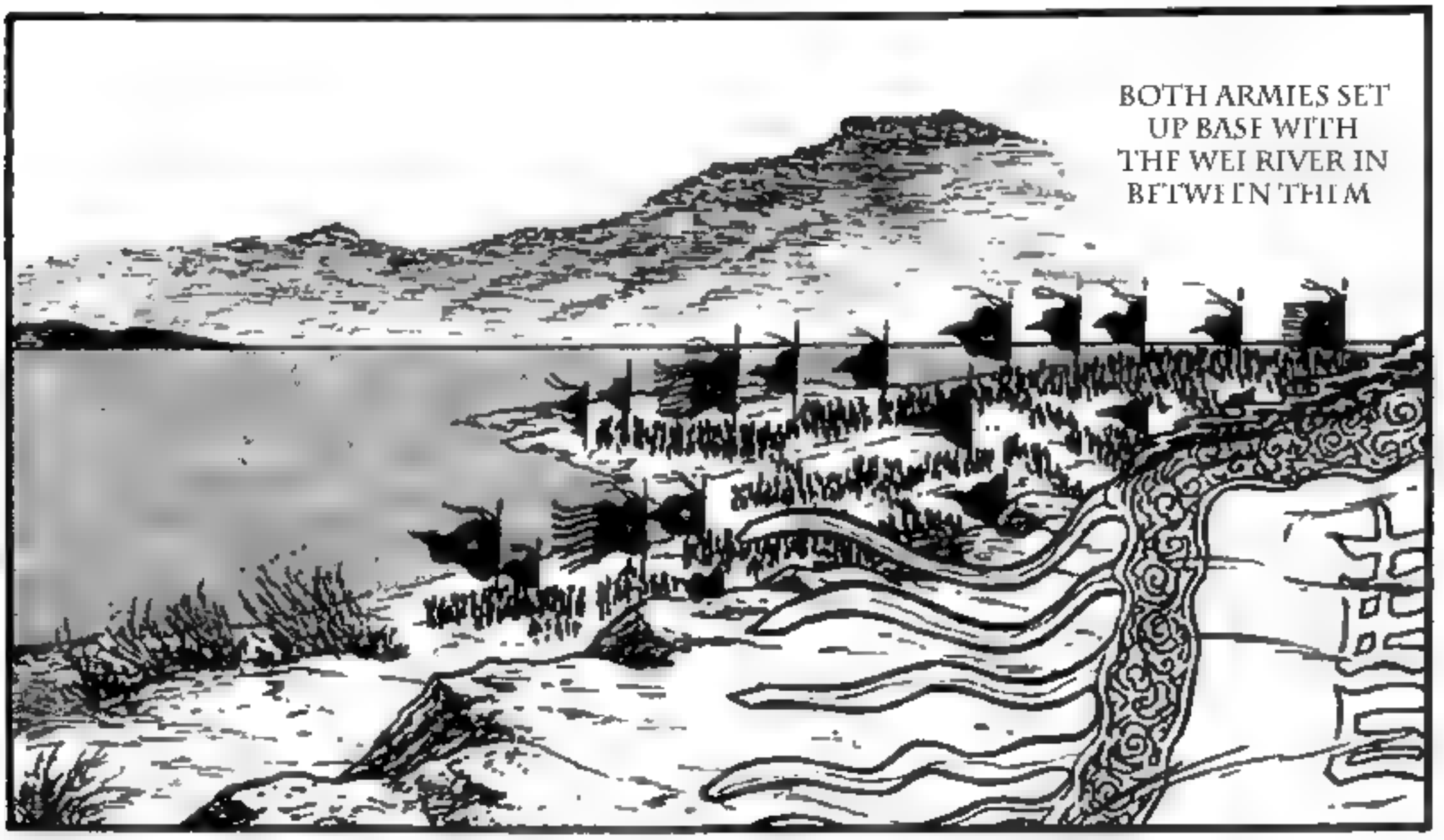
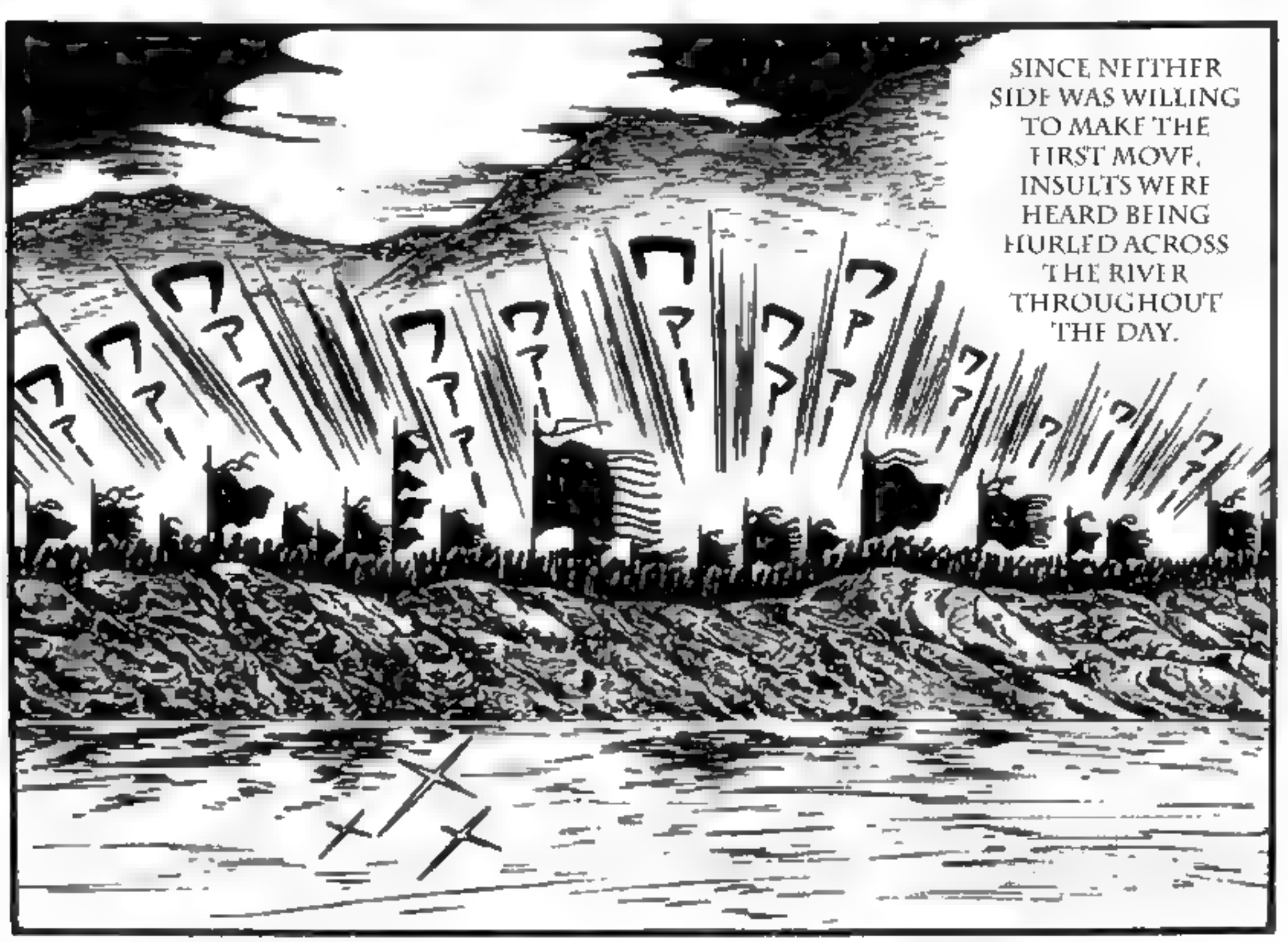
RIVER CROSSING PLAN




SINCE NEITHER SIDE WAS WILLING TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE, INSULTS WERE HEARD BEING HURLED ACROSS THE RIVER THROUGHOUT THE DAY.

THIS IS DRIVING ME INSANE, THOUGH I HAVE TO ADMIT, I'M IMPRESSED THEY CAN COME UP WITH SO MANY INSULTS IN THE FIRST PLACE.
THEY'RE SPOUTING INSULTS AGAIN.
CHANCELLOR, FOR HOW LONG MUST WE STAND HERE AND MERELY STARE OUR ENEMIES DOWN?
I FOR ONE, AM SICK AND TIRED OF DOING NOTHING BUT LISTENING TO THEIR INSULTS ALL DAY LONG.

SIMPLY CHARGING WITHOUT A GOOD STRATEGY WILL ONLY LEAD TO THE SAME RESULT AS LAST TIME.

WE CANNOT AFFORD TO UNDERESTIMATE THESE WARRIORS FROM XILIANG. THEY RIDE THEIR HORSES EFFORTLESSLY AS IF THEY WERE A NATURAL EXTENSION OF THEIR BODIES.

A PLAN...

NOW... DOES ANYONE HERE HAVE A GOOD PLAN TO SUGGEST?

I'M AFRAID NOT, SIR.

YES, XU HUANG?

CHANCEL-LOR!

AND EXACTLY HOW?

EVEN IF WE CONTINUE TO STARE OUR ENEMIES DOWN FOR OVER A YEAR, OUR SITUATION WILL NOT CHANGE. WE MUST BE THE ONES TO ACT AGGRESSIVELY.

THUS, I SUGGEST WE CROSS THE RIVER AT THESE LESS GUARDED POINTS, WHICH WOULD ALLOW US TO FLANK THEIR MAIN FORCES.

THE ENEMIES ARE SO FOCUSED HERE THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE MEN STATIONED AT THE NORTHERN AND WESTERN PARTS OF THE WEI RIVER.

HMM, NOT BAD...

YES, SIR.

ALRIGHT THEN. TAKE 4000 SOLDIERS ALONG WITH ZHU LING AS YOUR VICE-CAPTAIN AND CROSS THE RIVER WEST FROM HERE. ONCE I CROSS THE RIVER TO ENGAGE THE ENEMIES, THAT WILL BE THE SIGNAL FOR YOU TO COME OUT OF HIDING AND STRIKE THEIR REAR.

YES, SIR.

AS FOR THE REST OF YOU, MAKE THE PREPARATIONS TO CROSS THE RIVER WITH ME FROM THE NORTH.

START MAKING THE RAFTS!

XILIANG'S ARMY ENCAMPMENTS

MA CHAO, IT SEEMS THE ENEMIES HAVE JUST GIVEN US A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.

YOU SPOTTED THEM MAKING RAFTS?

EXACTLY.

AS SUN TZU'S ART OF WAR STATES, "LET HALF OF THE ENEMIES CROSS THE RIVER BEFORE ATTACKING."

YES, SIR!

HAVE ALL MEN ON HIGH ALERT TO DETERMINE EXACTLY WHERE CAO CAO PLANS TO CROSS THE RIVER.

GOOD.

THE PREPARATIONS ARE COMPLETE, CHANCELLOR.

SEND THE 1ST DIVSION TO CROSS FIRST. IF THEY REACH THE OTHER SIDE SUCCESSFULLY, THE REST ARE TO FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY.

MEN OF THE 1ST DIVISION! GET ON YOUR RAFTS!

曹

SEND THE 2ND DIVISION.
THE 1ST DIVISION HAS SAFELY REACHED THE OTHER SIDE, SIR.
曹
SOLDIERS OF THE 2ND DIVISION! START CROSSING THE RIVER!

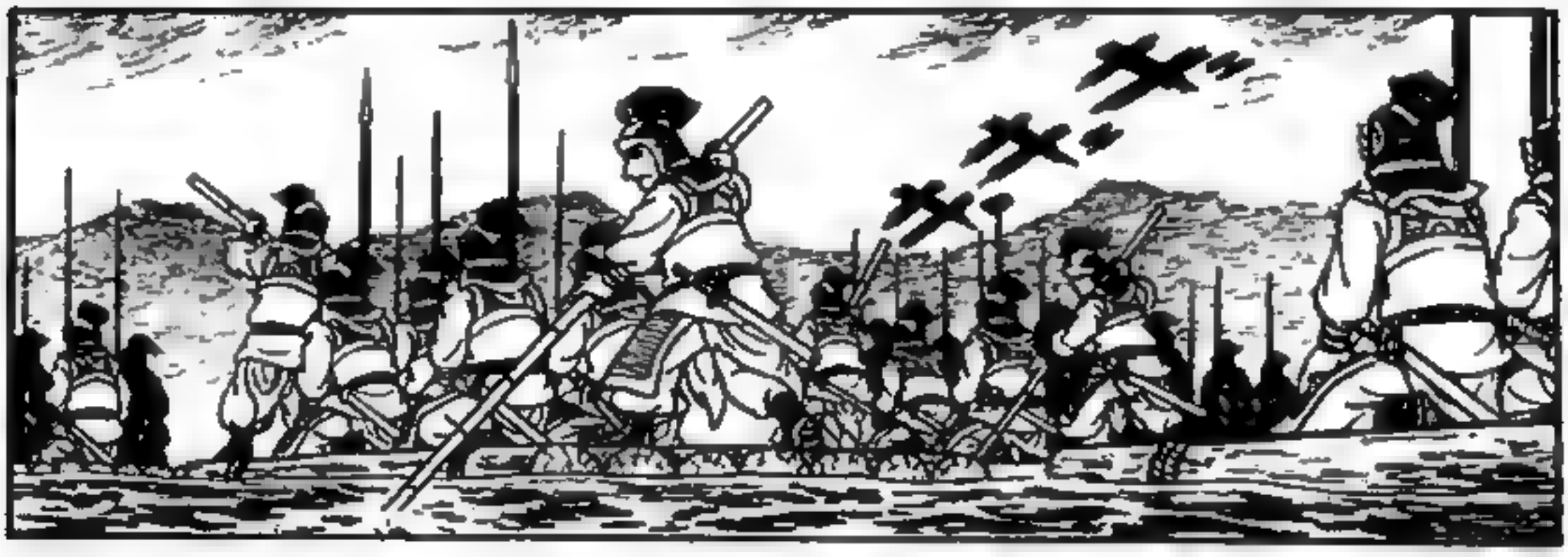
?
CHANCEL-
LOR!

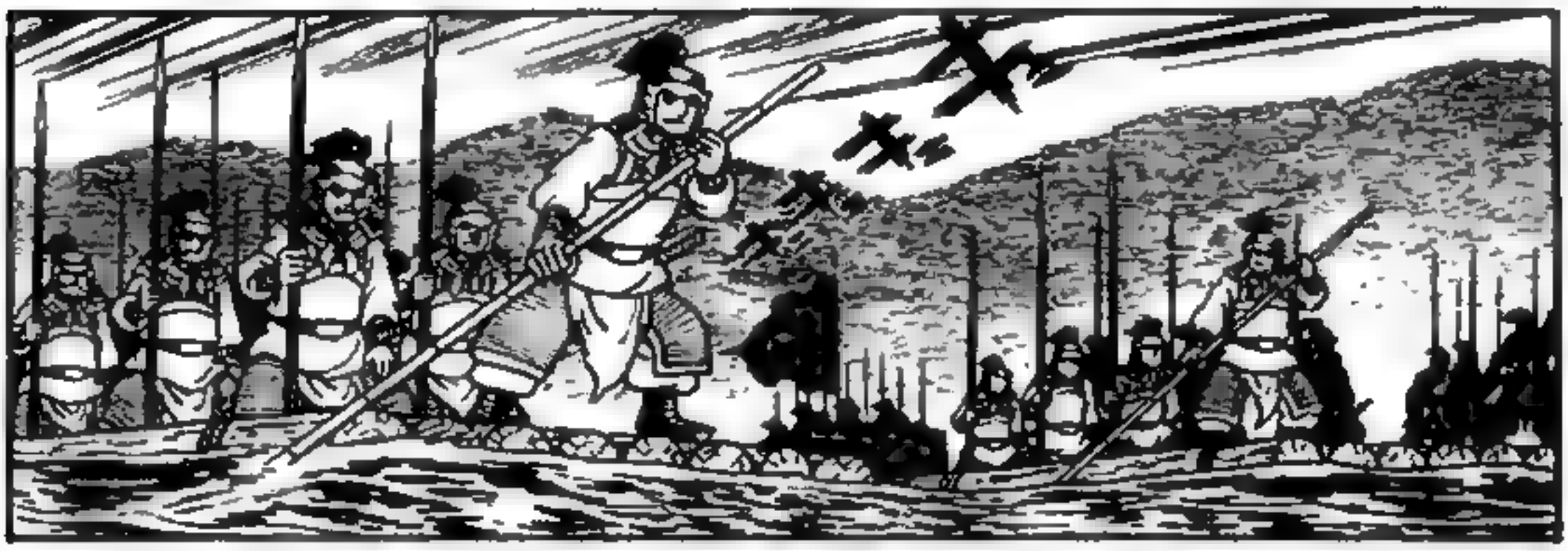
YOU DON'T KNOW IF THEY'RE ENEMIES OR NOT?

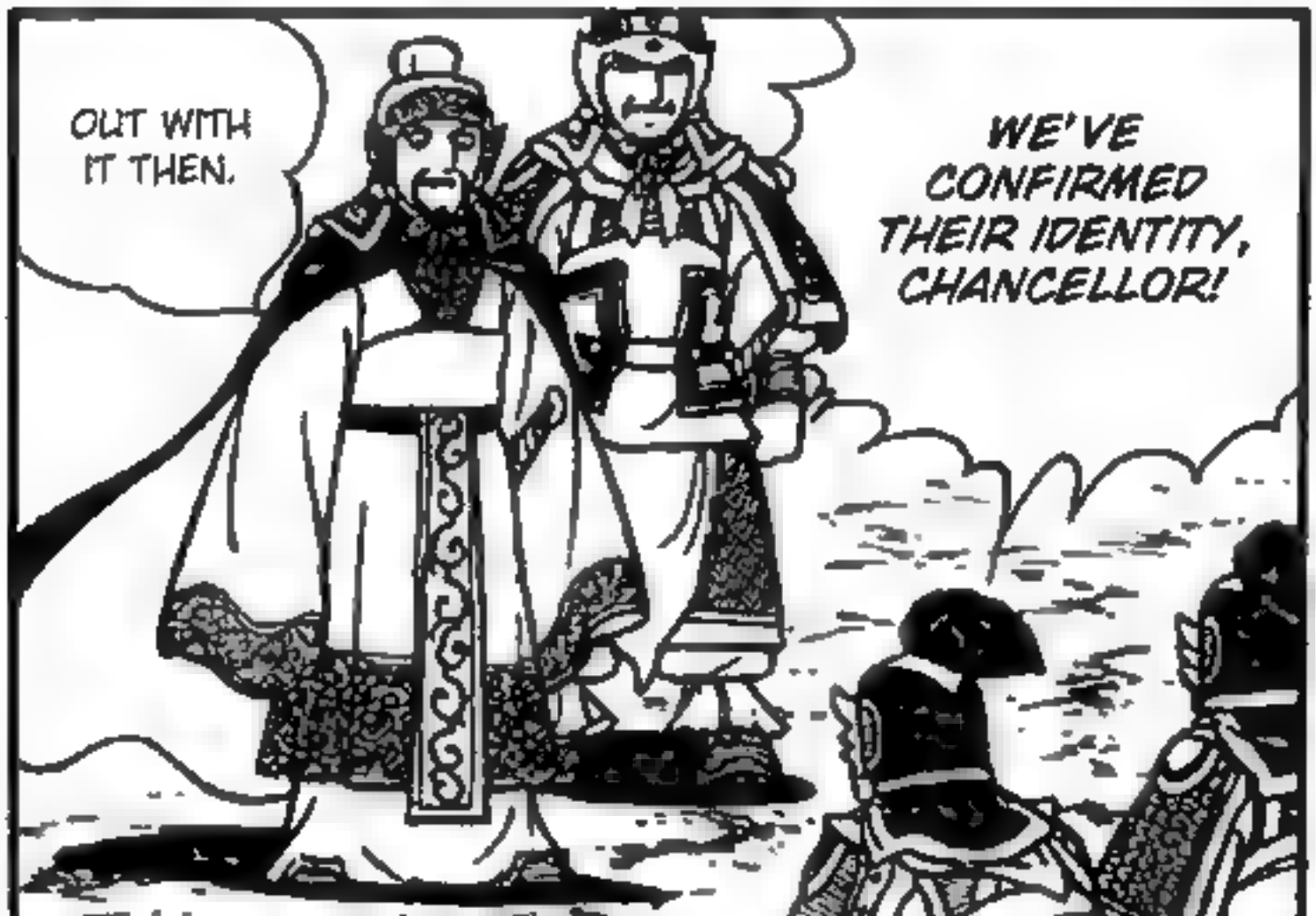
CAVALRY HAVE BEEN SPOTTED JUST SOUTH OF HERE AND THEY'RE HEADED THIS WAY! IT IS STILL UNCLEAR AT THIS TIME WHETHER THEY'RE ENEMIES OR NOT!

YES, SIR!
曹
HURRY UP AND FIND OUT WHO THEY ARE!

HASTEN THE CROSSING, MEN!






OUT WITH IT THEN.
WE'VE CONFIRMED THEIR IDENTITY, CHANCELLOR!

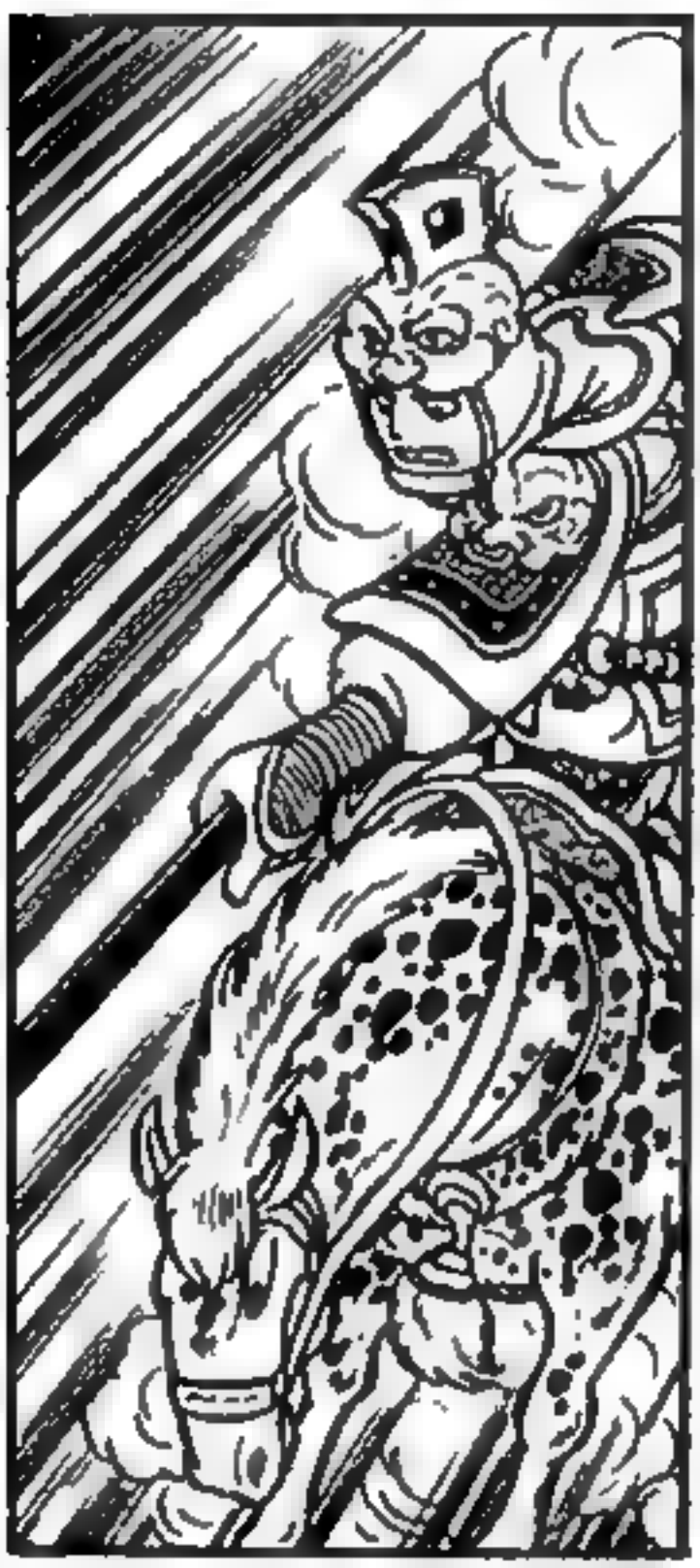
ZZZ

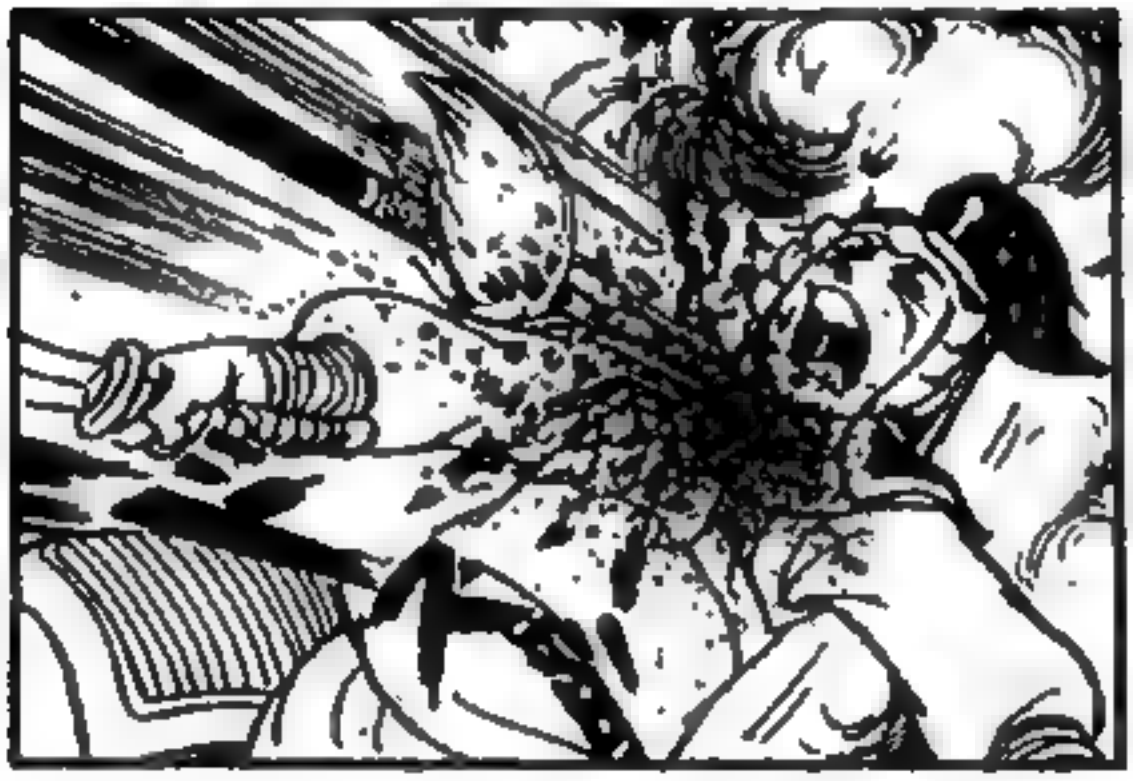
CURSES! JUST WHERE IN GOD'S NAME DID THEY CROSS FROM!?

IT'S TOO DANGEROUS FOR MY CHANCELLOR TO STAY HERE!

FORGIVE MY IMPUDENCE, SIR.

PLEASE DO NOT DELAY, SIR. WE DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH SOLDIERS LEFT ON THIS SIDE TO HOLD THEM BACK.





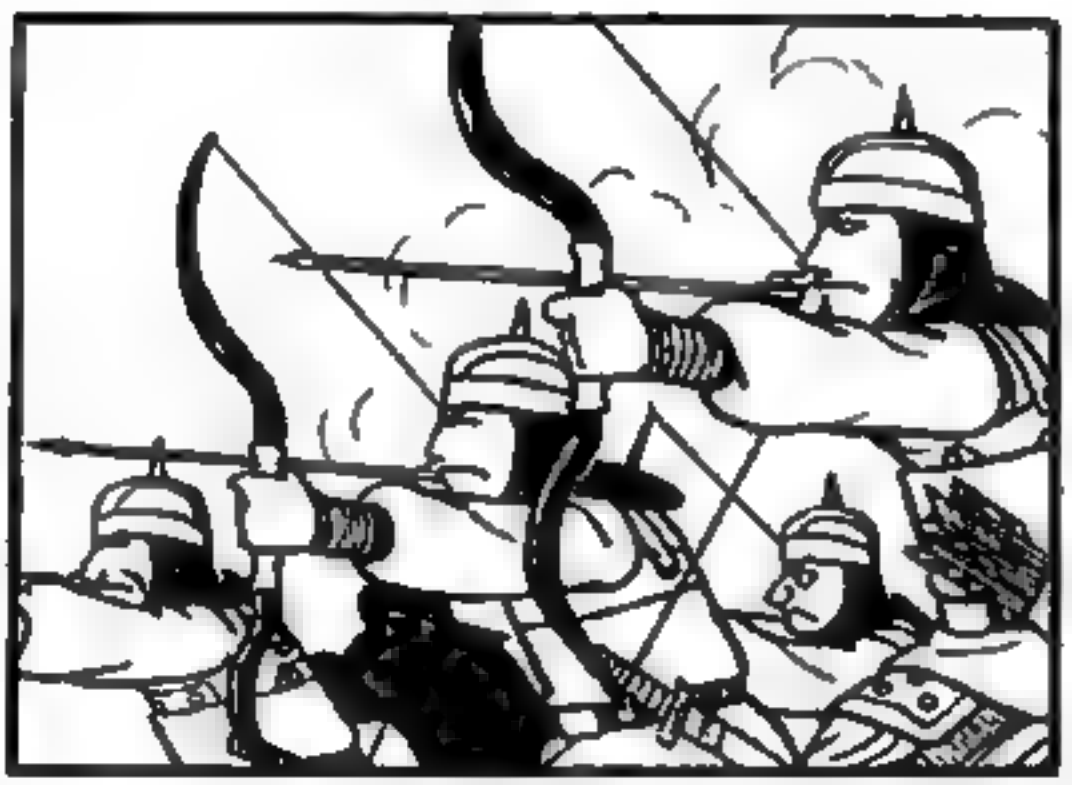
HM?

CAO CAO! SHOW YOURSELF!

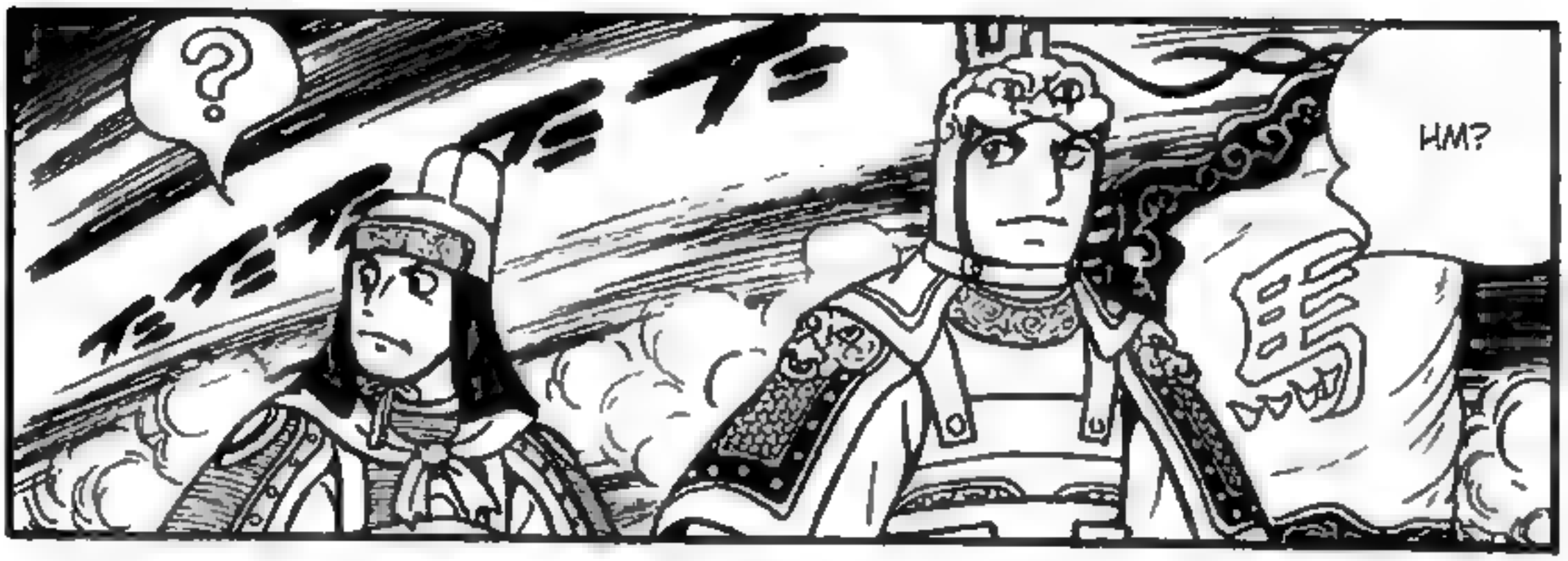
SHOOT HIM!

THERE HE IS! LOOK, MEN! THE MAN ON THAT BOAT IS CAO CAO!

PLEASE DUCK, MY LORD!



SHOOT! SHOOT! KEEP SHOOTING BEFORE THEY'RE OUT OF RANGE!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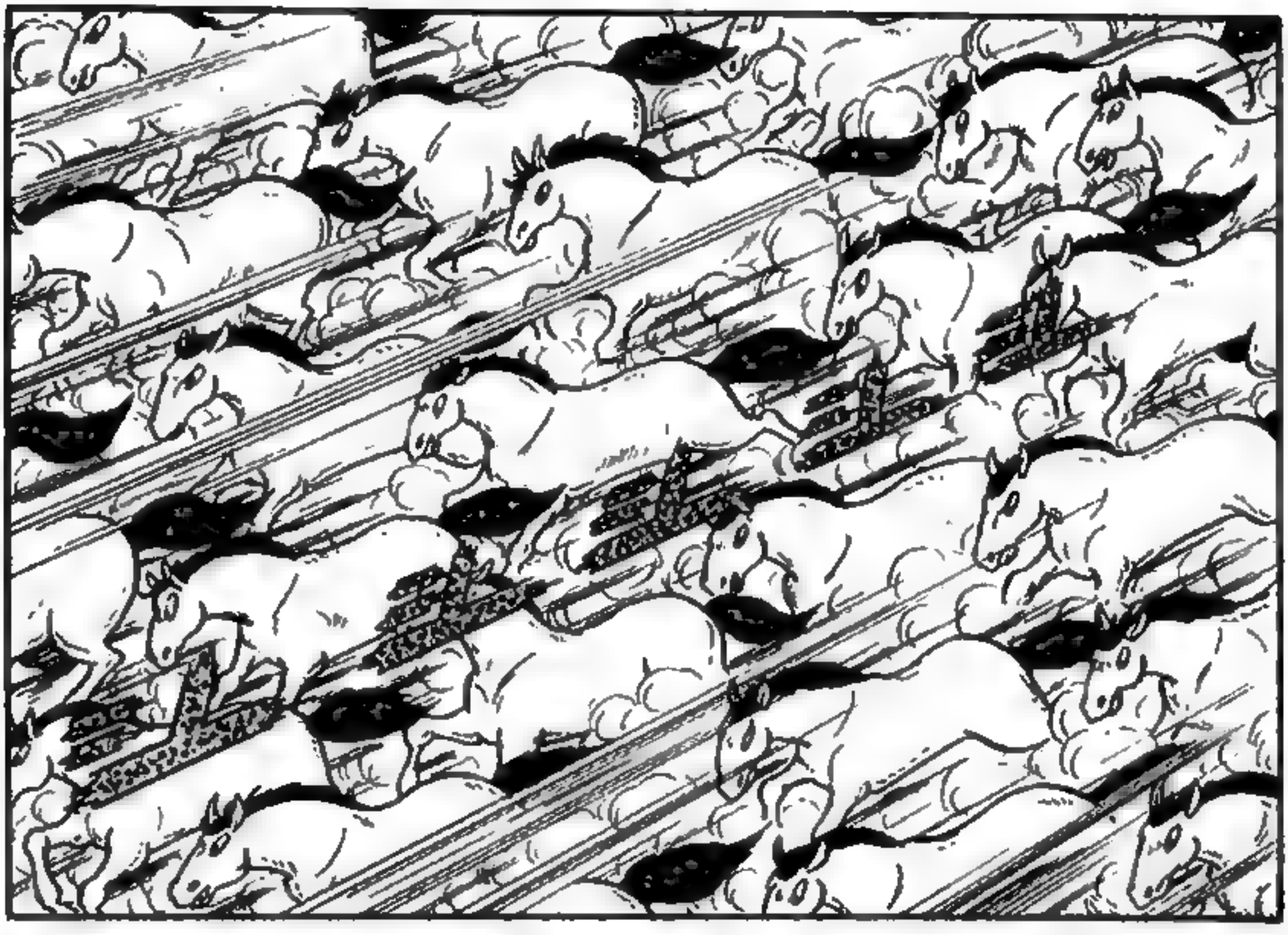
HM?

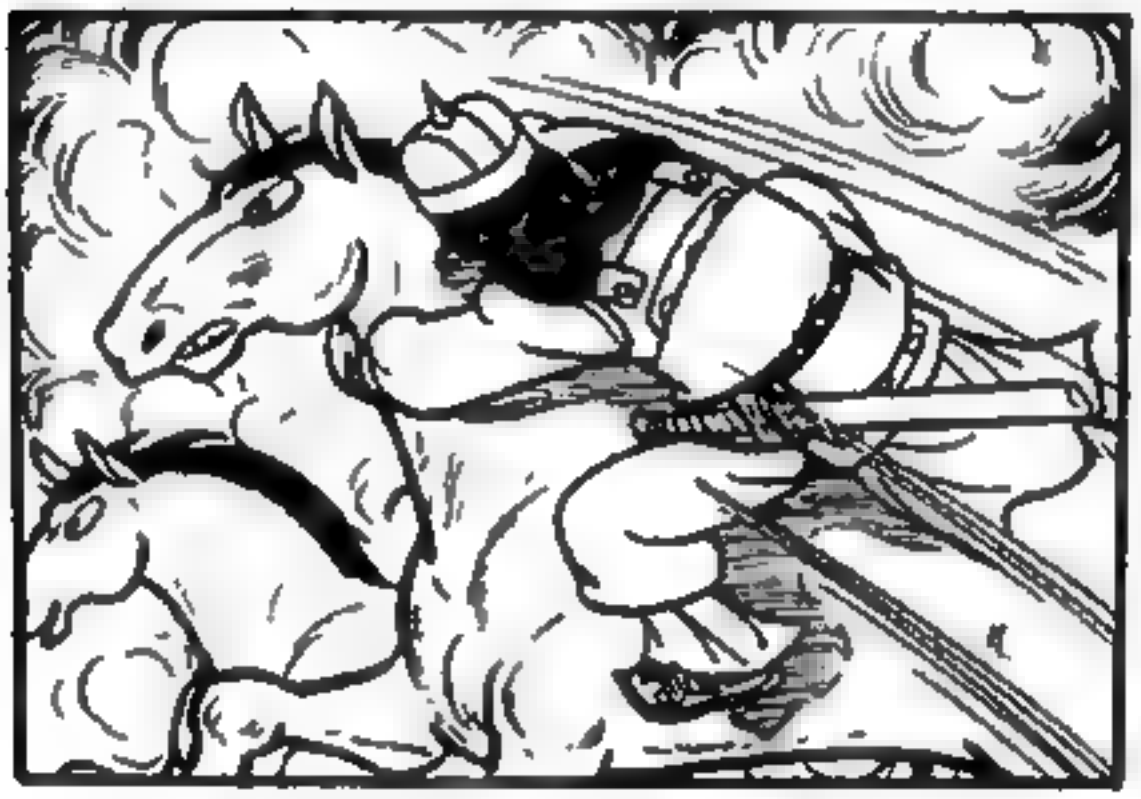
ARE THOSE HORSES!?

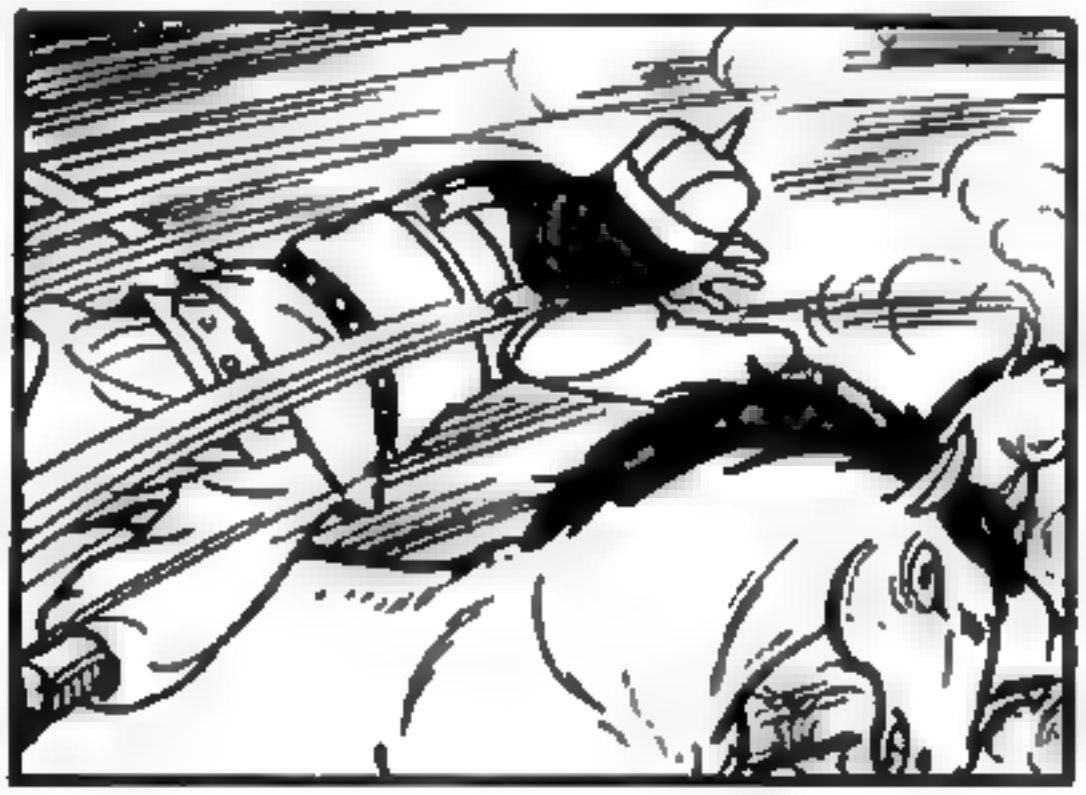
JUST LOOK AT'EM BEAUTIES!



I CALL DIBS ON THAT ONE!

GUYS, WE CAN'T JUST LET THEM RUN AWAY!





WHOA, NELLY!

THIS ONE'S FEISTY!

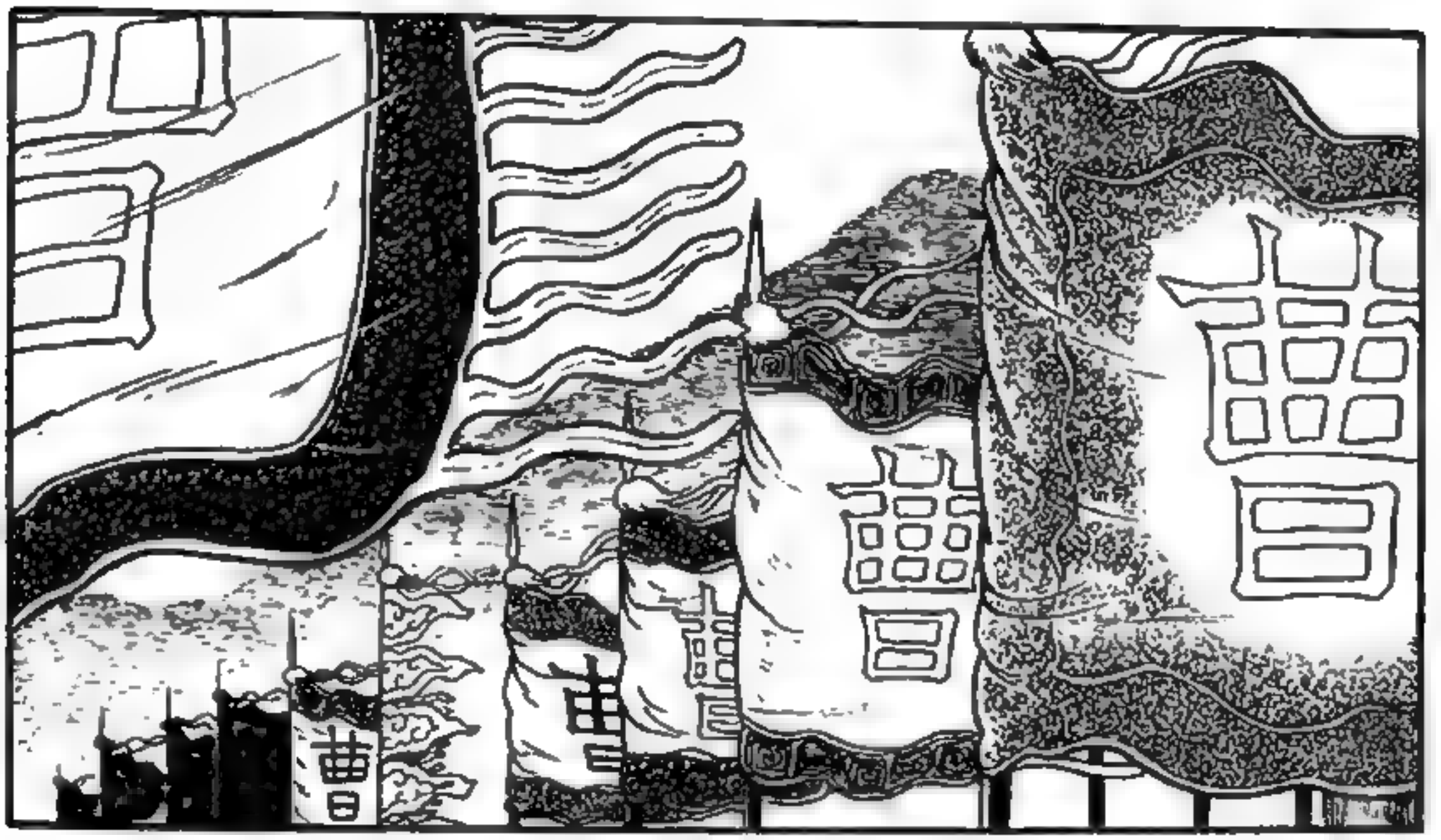
YES...

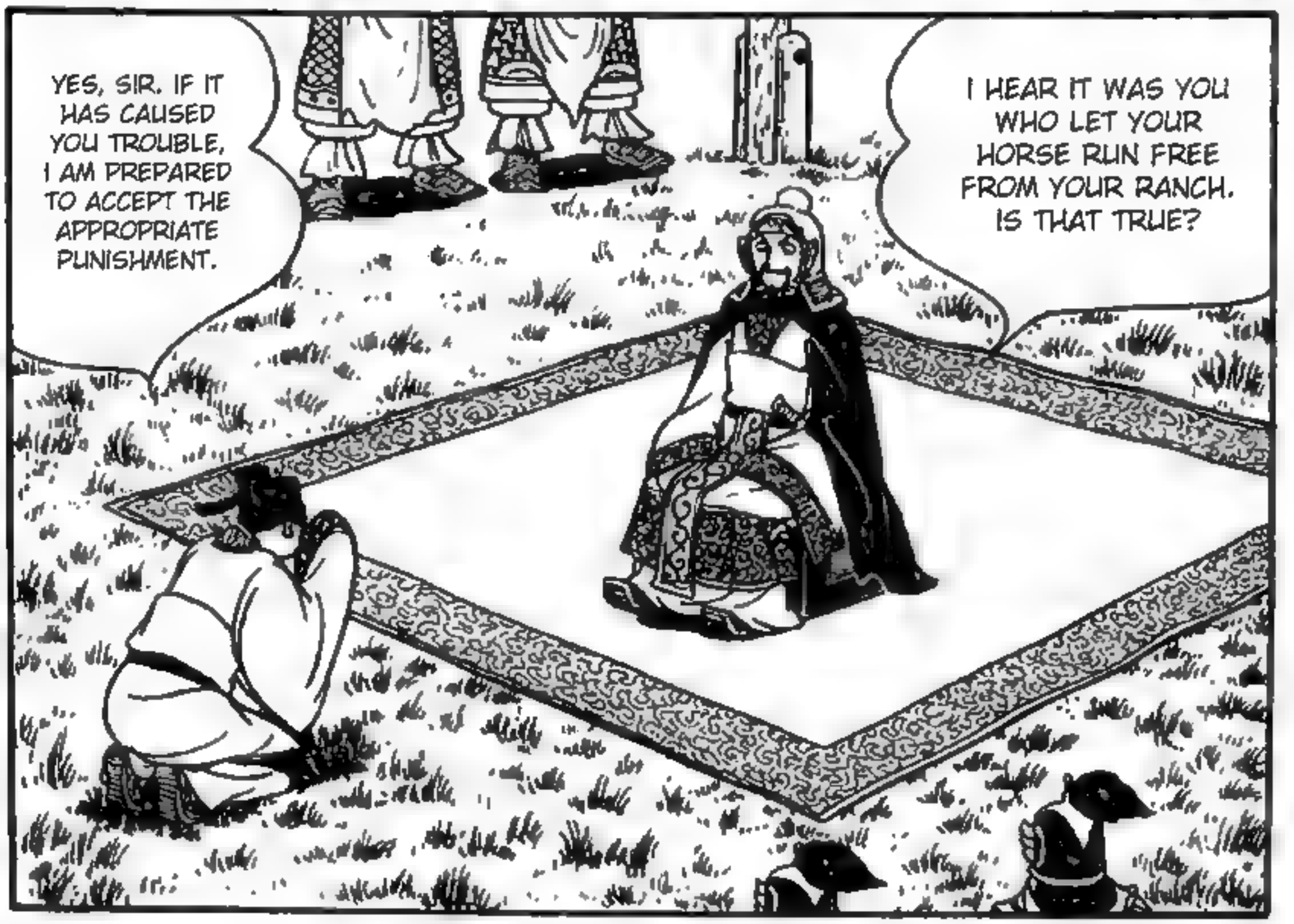
IT APPEARS SOMEONE HAS LET THEIR HORSES RUN FREE.

BY THE WAY XU CHU, ARE YOU INJURED ANYWHERE?
OH, HARDLY ANYTHING WORTH MENTIONING, CHANCEL-LOR.

QUITE A CLEVER MOVE ON HIS PART, WHOEVER HE IS.

EMPTY CAMPS




YES, SIR. IF IT HAS CAUSED YOU TROUBLE, I AM PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE APPROPRIATE PUNISHMENT.
I HEAR IT WAS YOU WHO LET YOUR HORSE RUN FREE FROM YOUR RANCH. IS THAT TRUE?

I AM DING FEI, MAGISTRATE OF WEINAN.

WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

曹

IS THAT SO?

COMMAND-ING OFFICER? ME!?

FROM TODAY, THIS SHALL BE YOUR NEW RANK AND JOB.

IT IS BECAUSE YOUR QUICK-WIT SAVED MY LIFE.

I VALUE TALENT NO MATTER WHERE I SEE IT. PLEASE CONTINUE TO SERVE ME WELL.

I CAME HERE, READY FOR PUNISHMENT, YET YOU GRANT ME THIS TITLE... YOU ARE TOO KIND, CHANCELLOR.

IN ANY CASE, MA CHAO'S RECENT AMBUSH PROVES THAT THERE MUST BE A FORD ALONG THE WEI RIVER THAT'S SHALLOW ENOUGH FOR HORSES TO CROSS.

AND UNTIL WE FIND THAT FORD, WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE AMBUSHED.

YES, SIR!
THUS, WE WILL FIRST PREPARE FOR THAT BY DIGGING TRENCHES!

I HEAR CAO CAO IS NOW PUTTING ALL HIS EFFORTS INTO FORTIFYING HIS POSITION. IF WE LET HIM CONTINUE UNDISTURBED, WE MAY BE FORCED TO DEAL WITH AN IMPENETRABLE FORTRESS.

YES, QUITE FRUSTRATING INDEED.

SUCH A CLOSE CALL. CAO CAO MANAGED TO ESCAPE JUST IN TIME FROM ME AGAIN.

GOOD. IF WE'VE REACHED AN AGREEMENT, LET'S TAKE ACTION AT ONCE.

YES, WE MUST ATTACK BEFORE THE CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETED.

IF THAT'S THE CASE, PLEASE TAKE PANG DE WITH YOU.

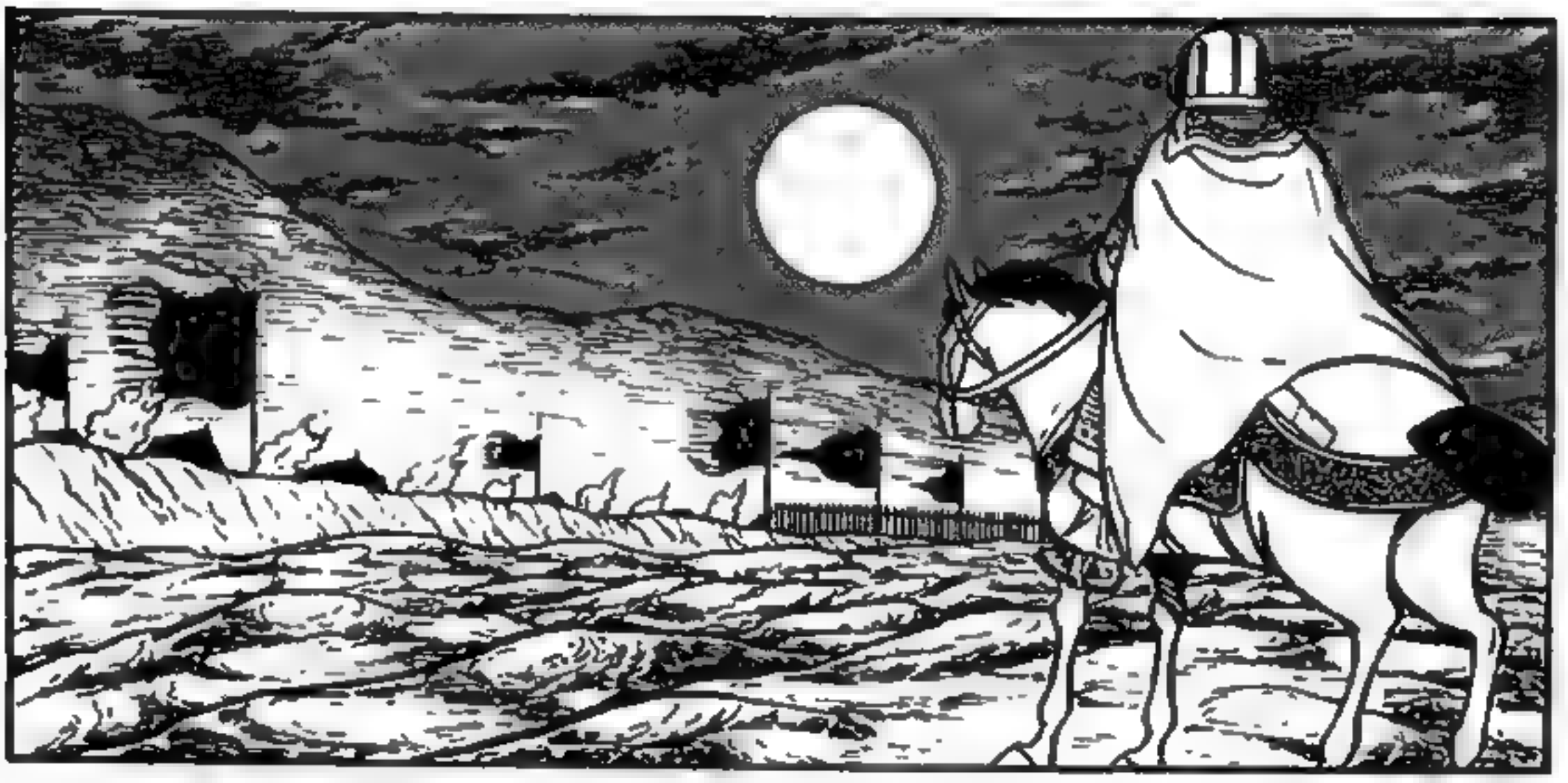
I'LL CONDUCT A SURPRISE RAID TONIGHT WITH 1000 OF MY HORSEMEN.

WHAT DO YOU PROPOSE?

FINE.

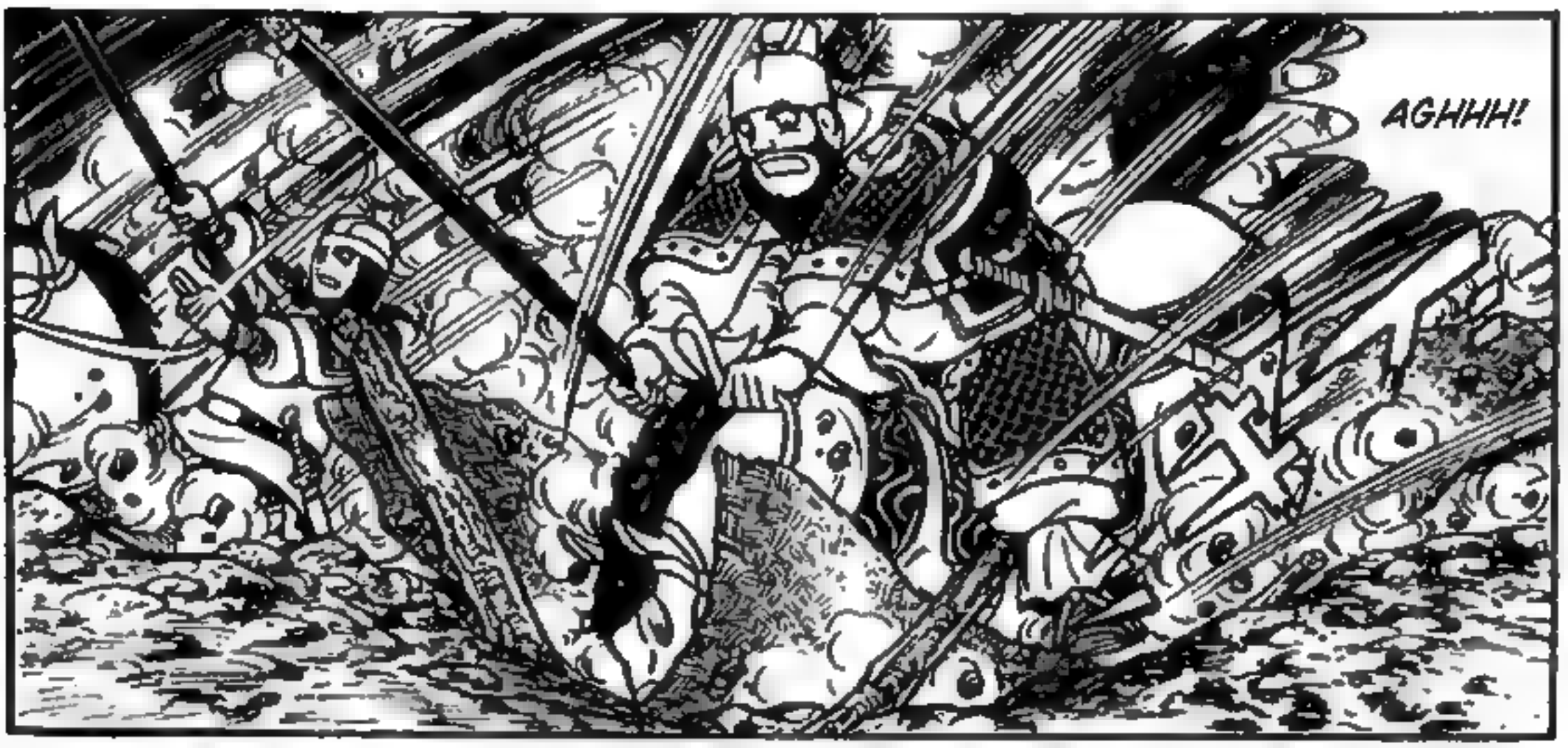
UNDERSTOOD.

IN THE MEANWHILE, WATCH OVER OUR ENCAMPMENTS AND SEE IF CAO CAO INTENDS TO CROSS THE RIVER AGAIN.



CHARGE!

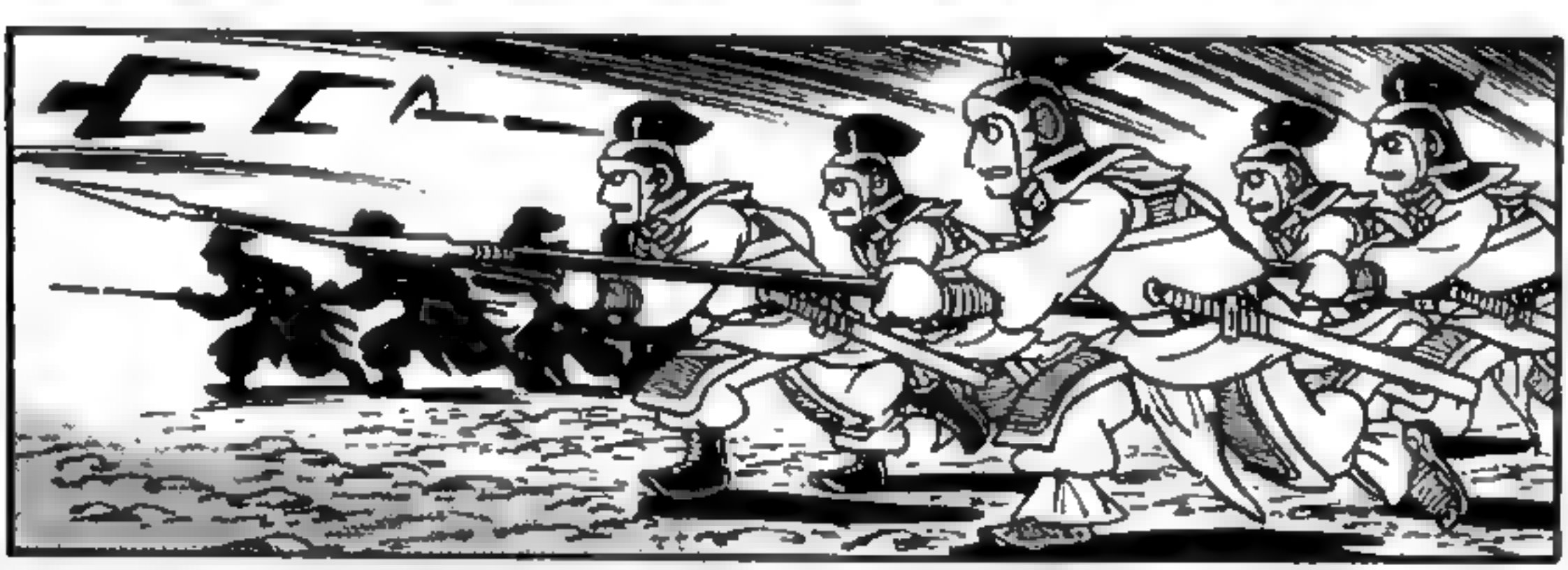
CAUSE AS MUCH HAVOC AS YOU CAN AND QUICKLY RETREAT.

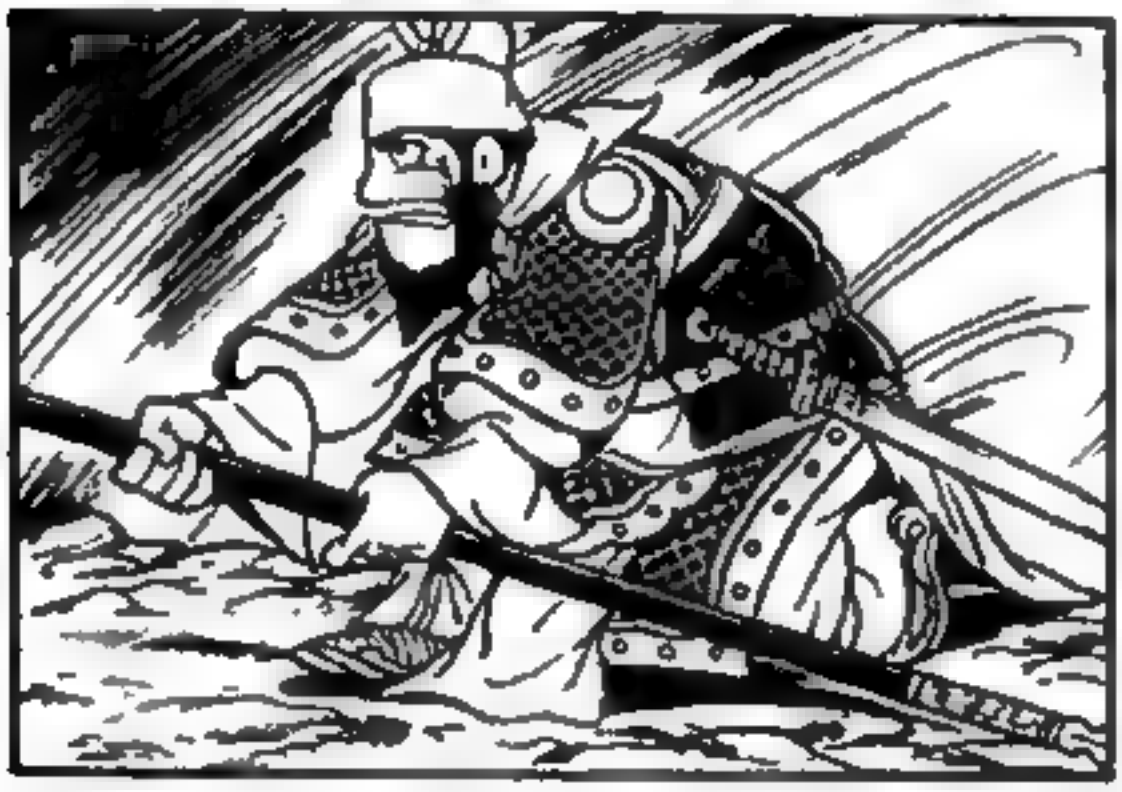

AGHHH!

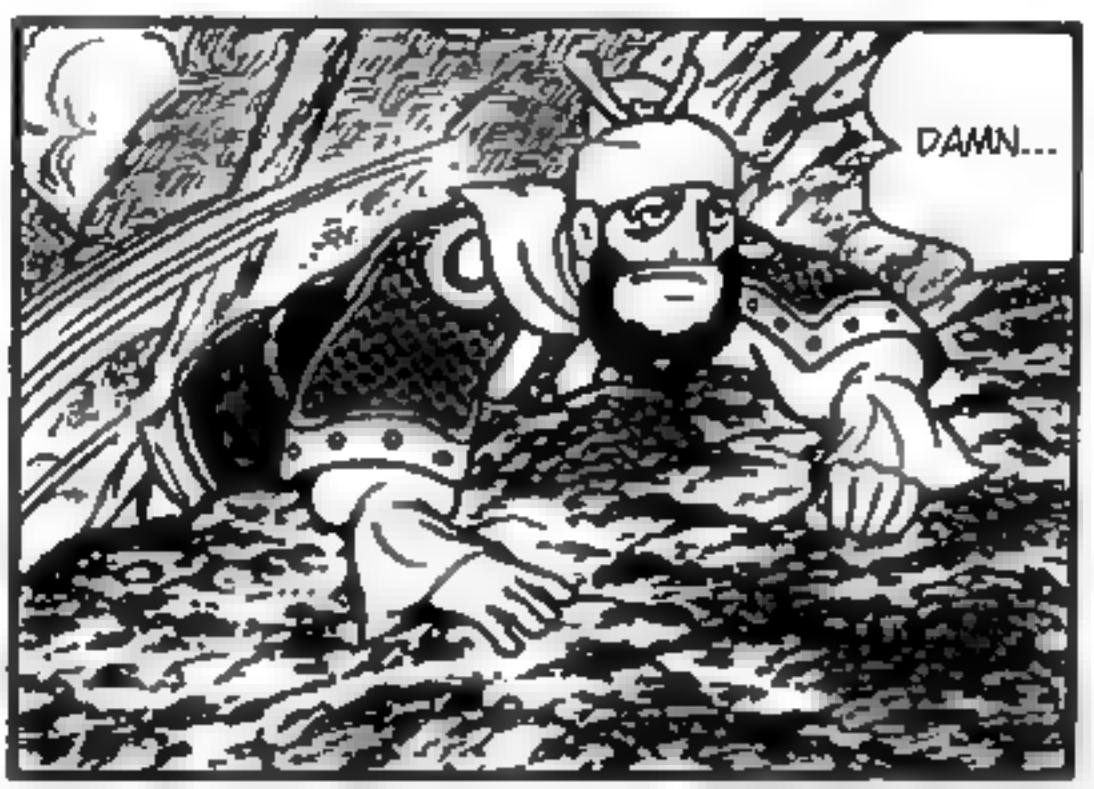
GAH!

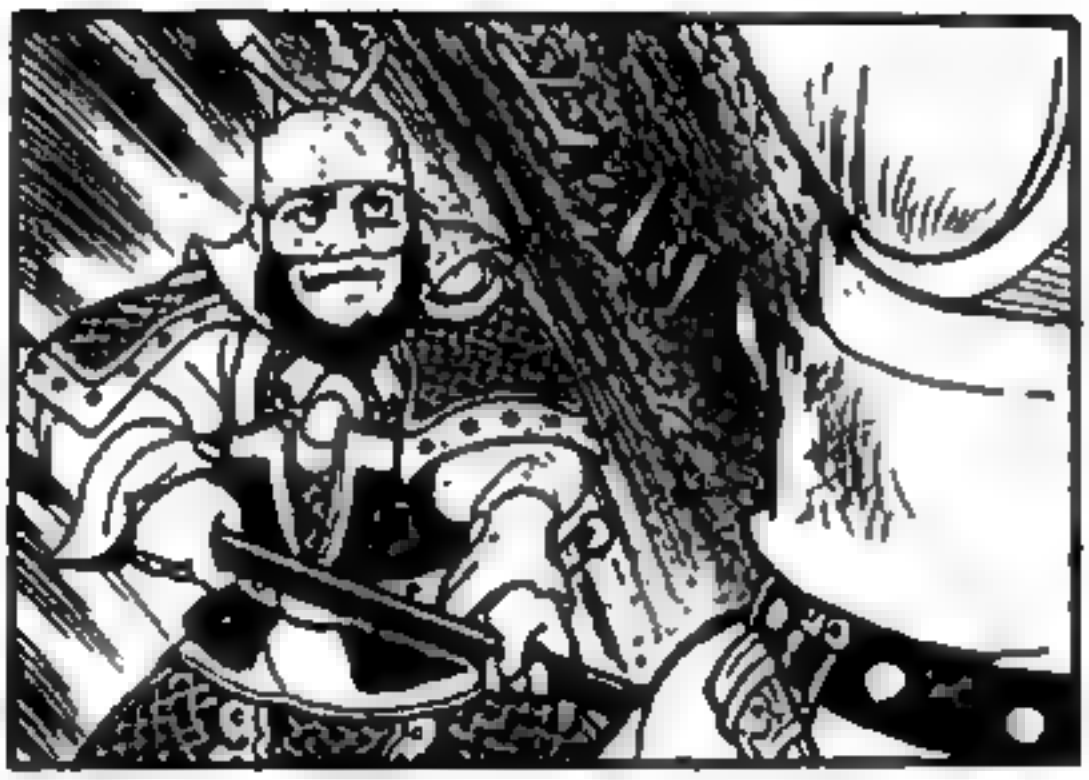
AHHH!

NOW!





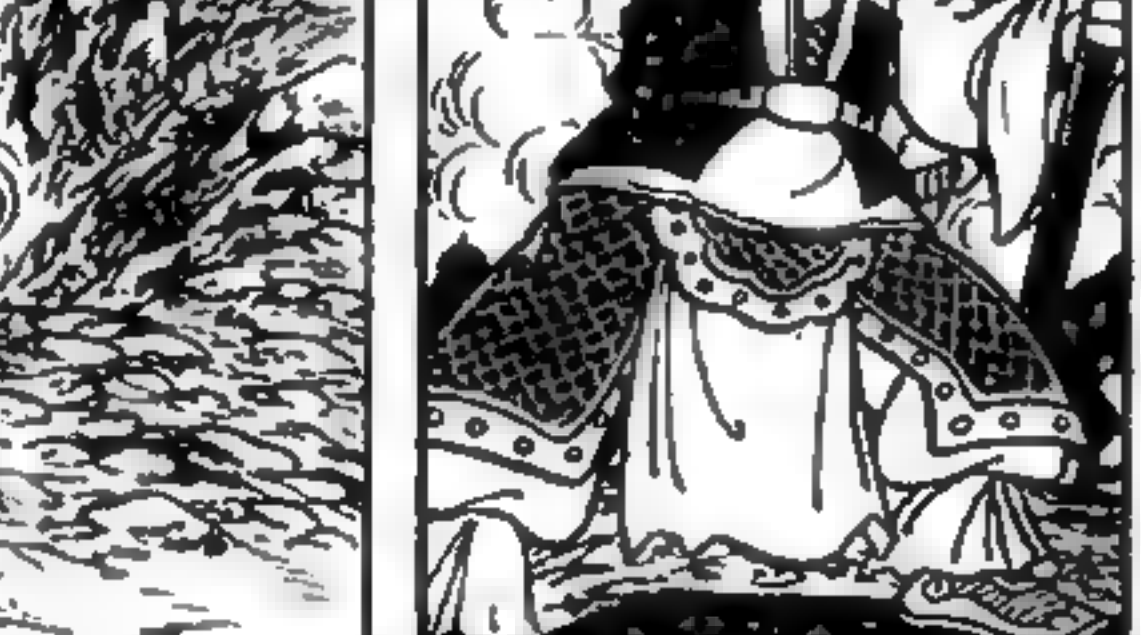

DAMN...



OVER HERE!

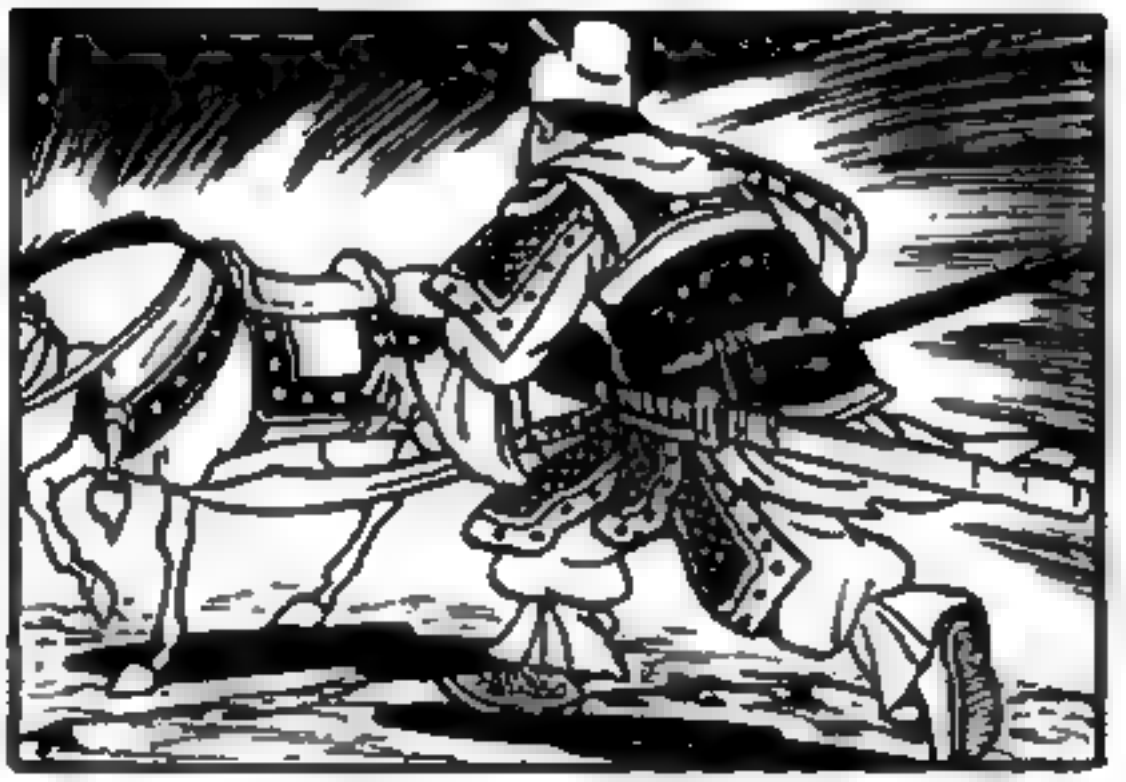
GENERAL HAN SUI! PLEASE RESPOND!

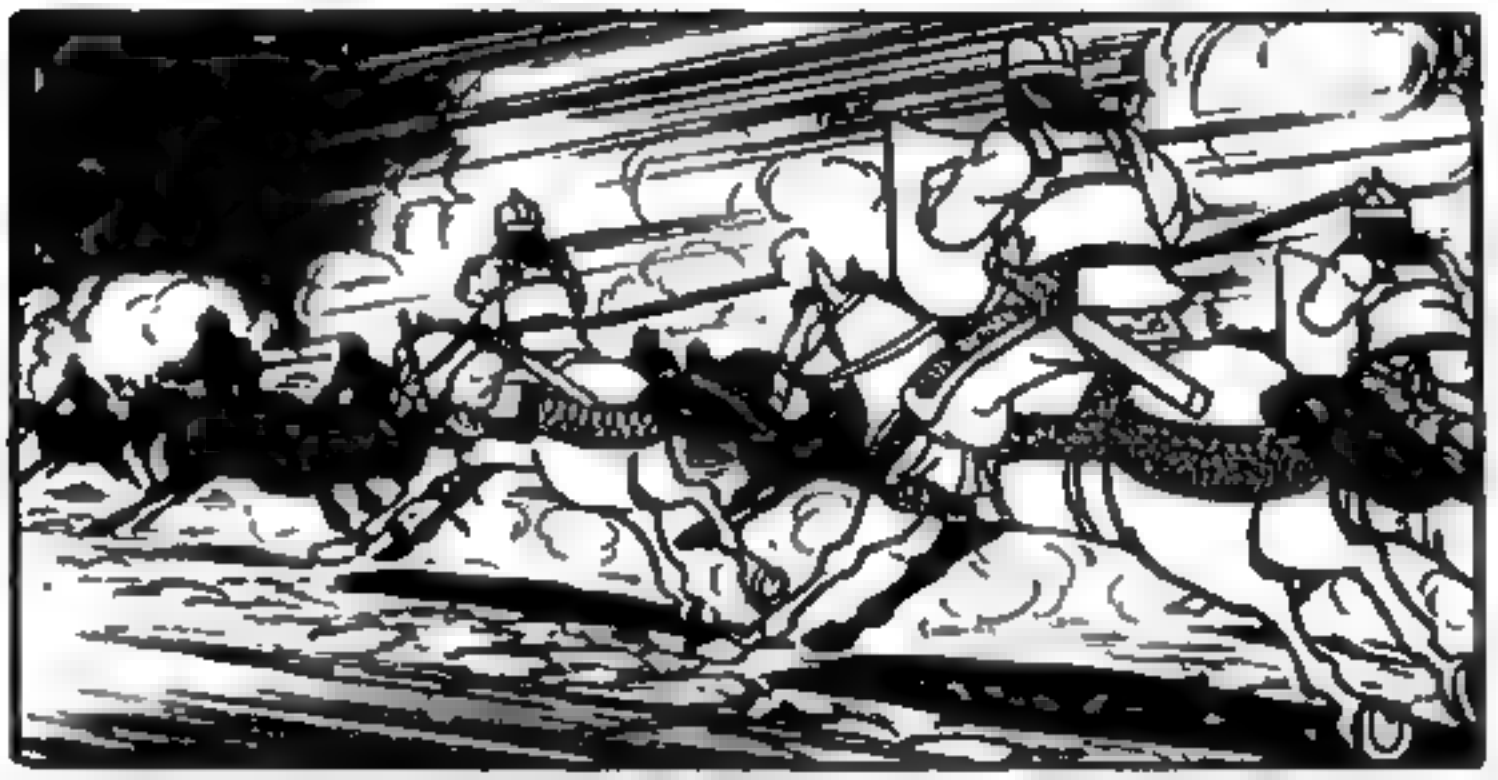
PLEASE GRAB ONTO THIS, SIR!



OH NO YOU DON'T!

PLEASE GET ON THIS HORSE.





RETREAT!
RETREAT!

NOT QUITE.
NOW THAT OUR ENEMIES HAVE LEARNED THE HARD WAY THAT WE'RE MORE THAN READY FOR THEM, I DOUBT THEY'LL TRY TO RAID US A SECOND TIME.

YES.
YOU MEAN TO SAY THEY'LL RAID US TWICE IN ONE NIGHT!?

WHAT!?
THE ENEMIES HAVE TAKEN ONLY LIGHT CASUALTIES. THEY'LL BE BACK AGAIN TONIGHT.

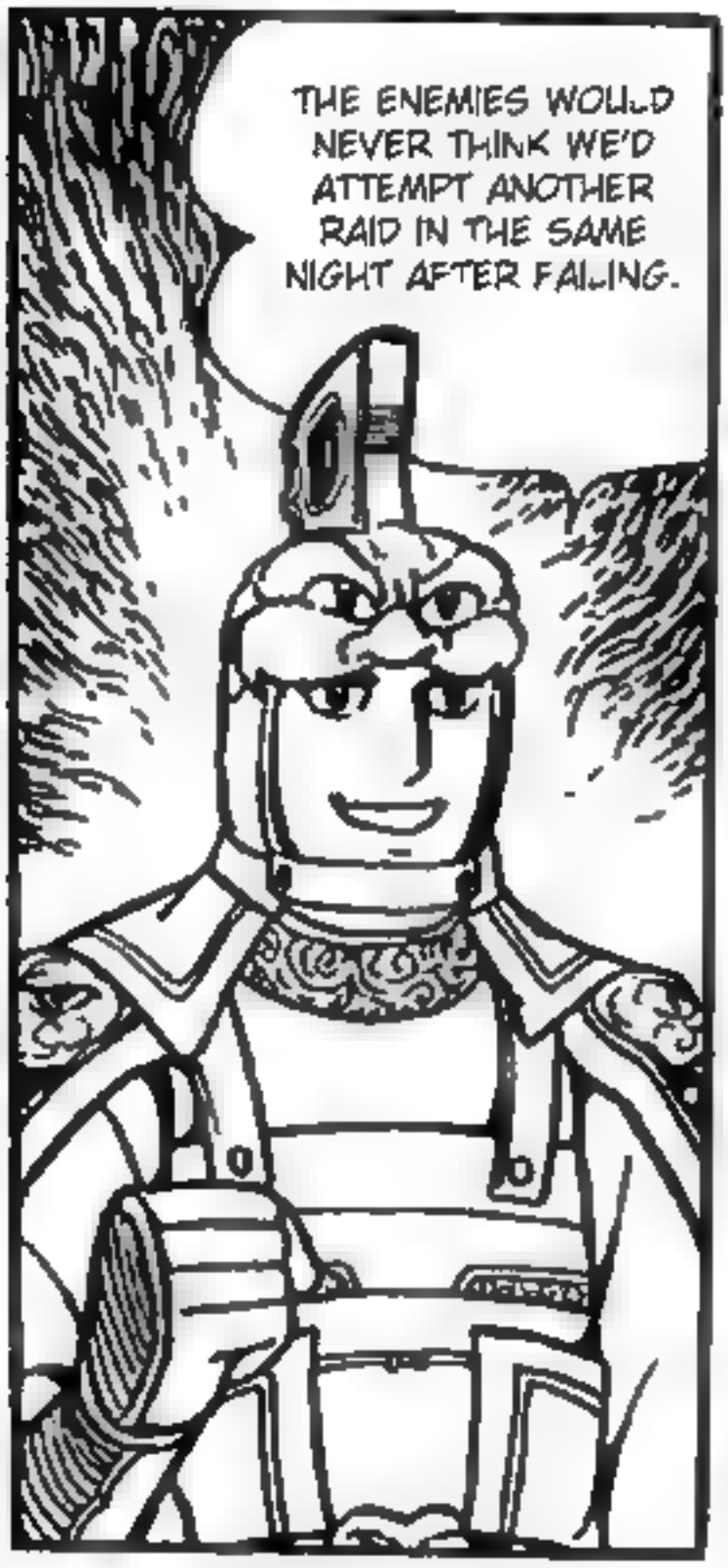
TELL THE MEN TO GET READY FOR ANOTHER RAID AT ONCE.
曹
曹

HOW DID THE RAID GO, SIR?

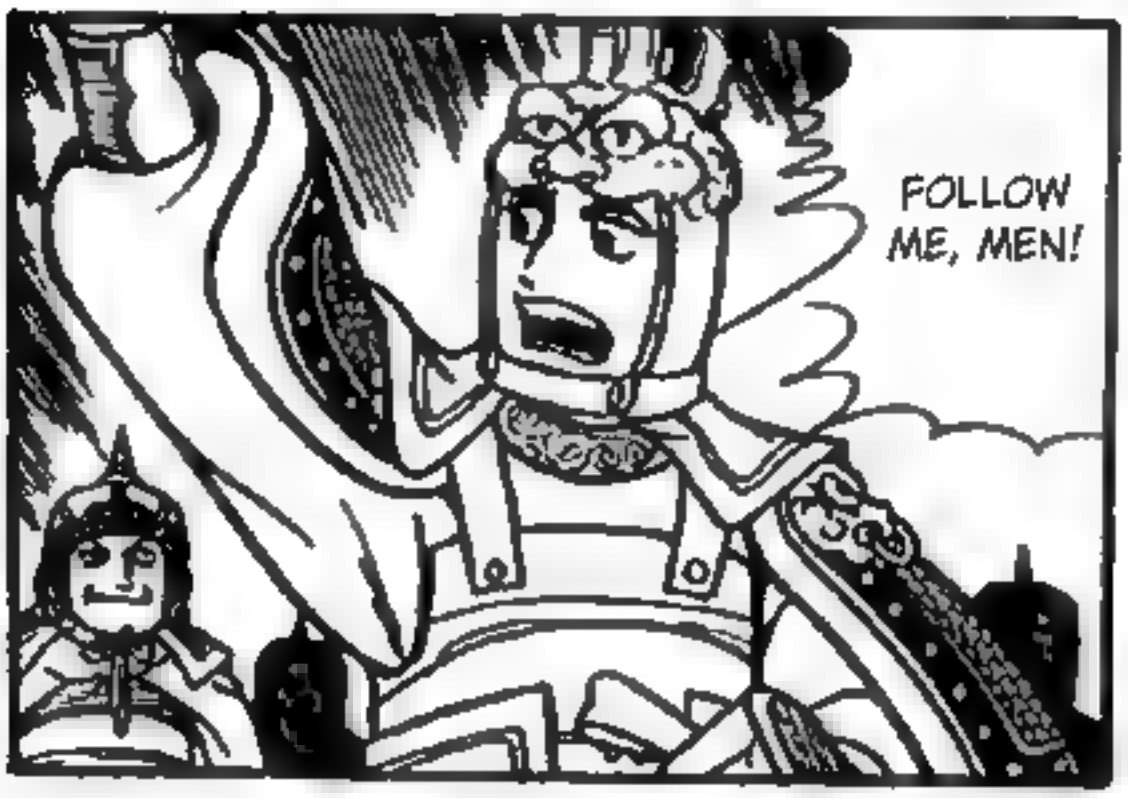
I'M AFRAID IT WAS A FAILURE. THE ENEMIES WERE LYING IN WAIT, HAVING DUG MANY HOLES TO DISMOUNT OUR HORSEMEN.

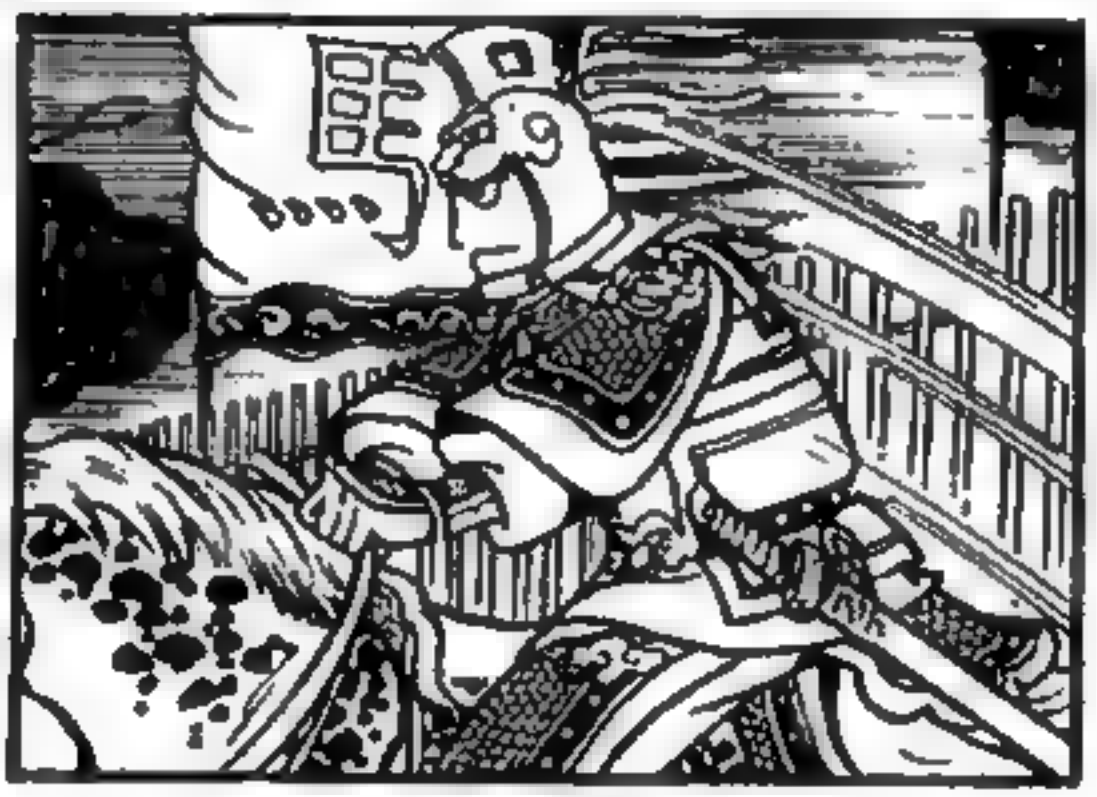
HMM...

CAO CAO'S PROBABLY HAVING A GOOD DRINK WITH HIS GENERAL RIGHT NOW, LAUGHING AT US.


THE ENEMIES WOULD NEVER THINK WE'D ATTEMPT ANOTHER RAID IN THE SAME NIGHT AFTER FAILING.

WHAT!?
THEN LET US TRY ANOTHER RAID.


FOLLOW ME, MEN!



CAO CAO'S ENCAMPMENTS ARE JUST UP AHEAD.

READY, MEN?

CHAAARGE!
?
HM?

IT'S COM-
PLETELY
EMPTY!

THERE'S
NOBODY
HERE!

CURSE THAT
CAO CAO...
HE MUST'VE
PREDICTED THAT
THERE'D BE A
SECOND RAID
TONIGHT...

RETREAT!

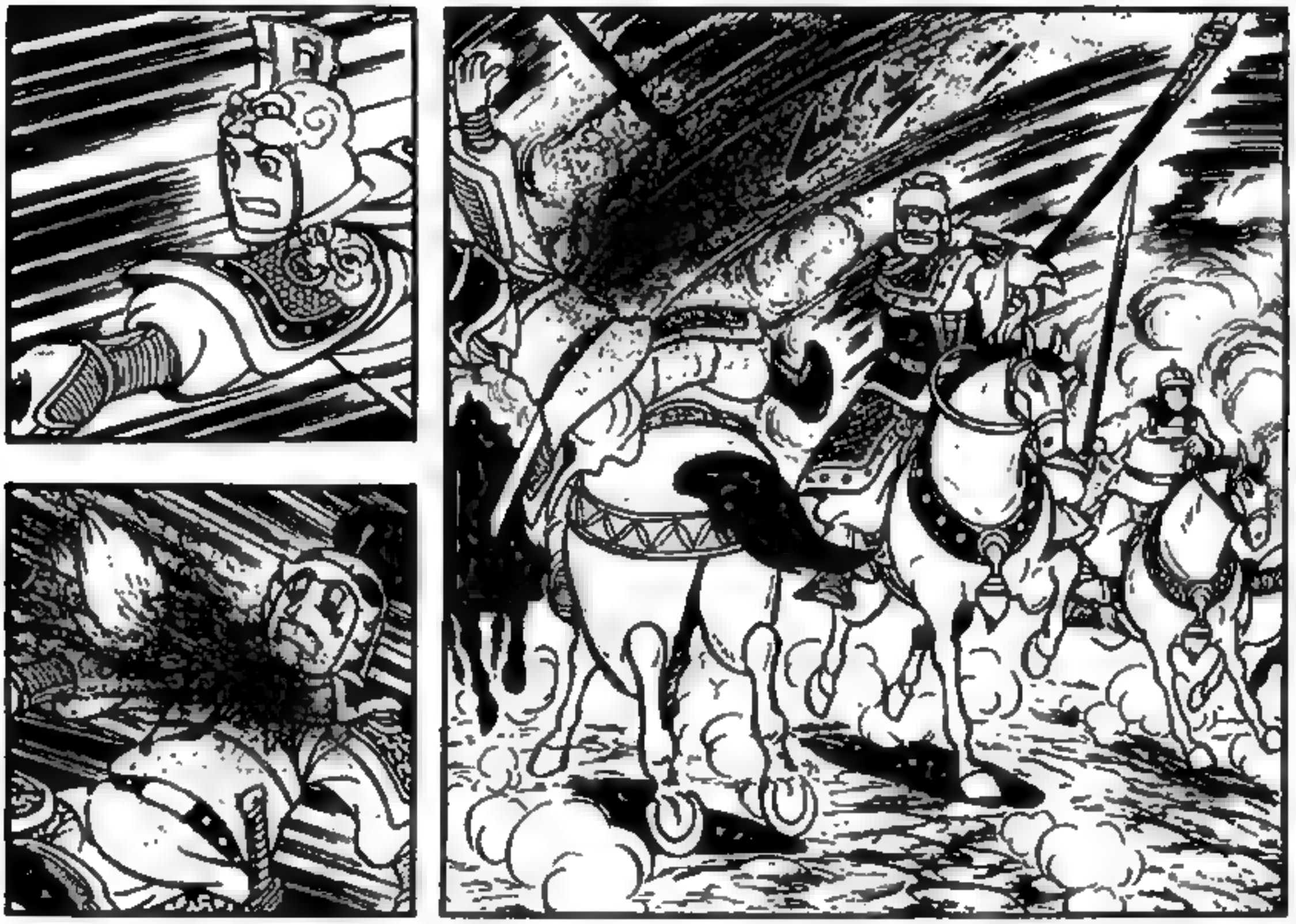
!?

!

?

CURSES!

IT'S AN
ENEMY
AMBUSH!

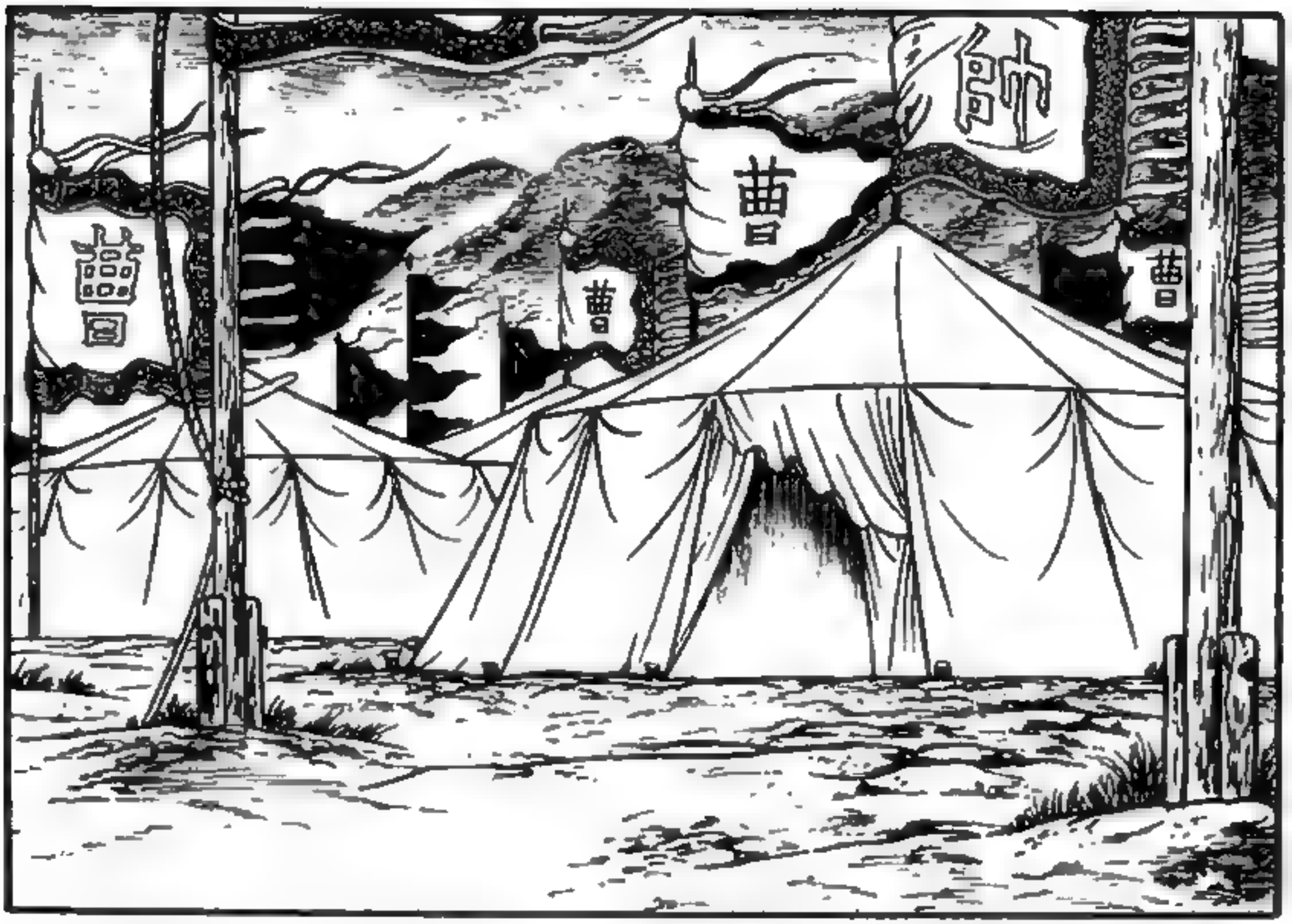


YES, WE HAVE TO WITHDRAW NO MATTER WHAT.
SIR! WE ONLY HAVE A SMALL RAIDING FORCE! WE'LL BE ANNHILATED BEFORE DAWN IF WE CONTINUE TO FIGHT!

WE MUST WITHDRAW!

RETREAT!

DESPITE THE TWO FAILURES ON THAT NIGHT, THE XILIANG FORCES WERE DETERMINED TO CONTINUE RAIDING CAO CAO'S CAMPS PERIODICALLY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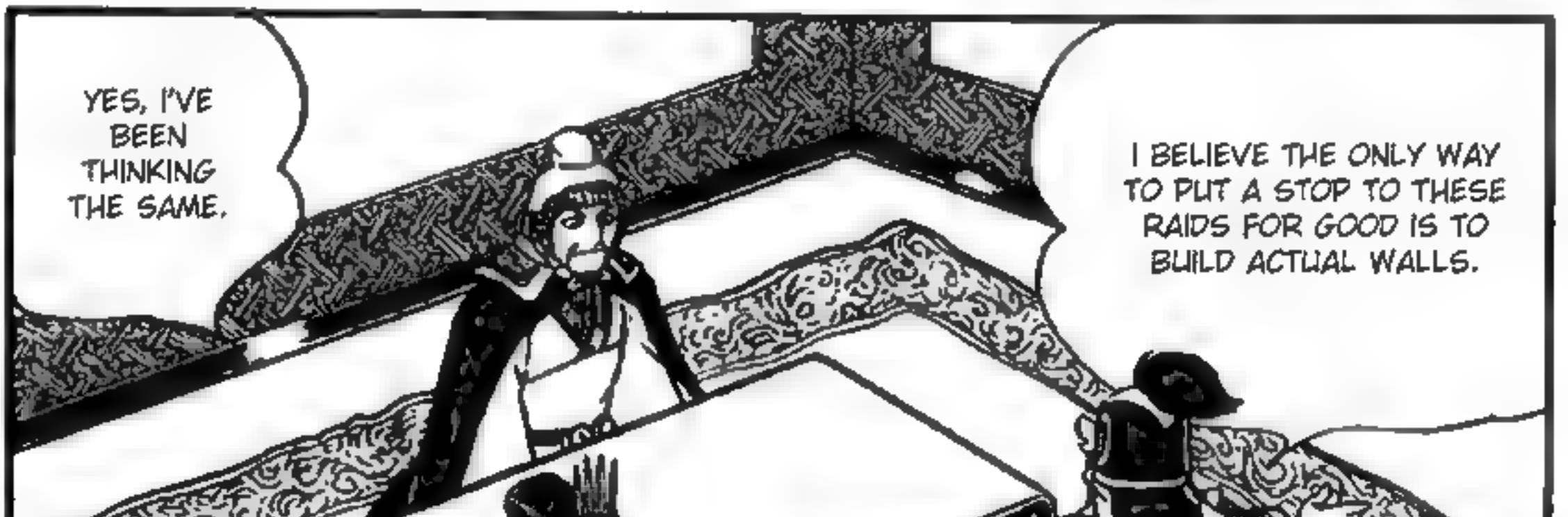
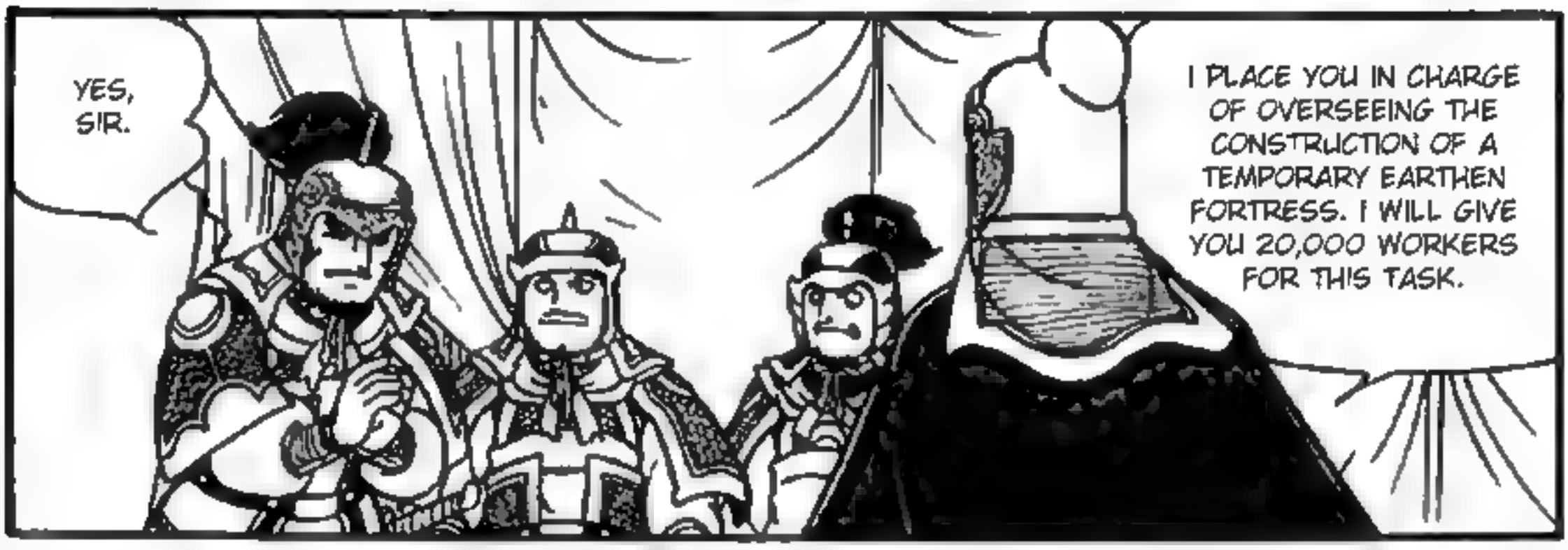
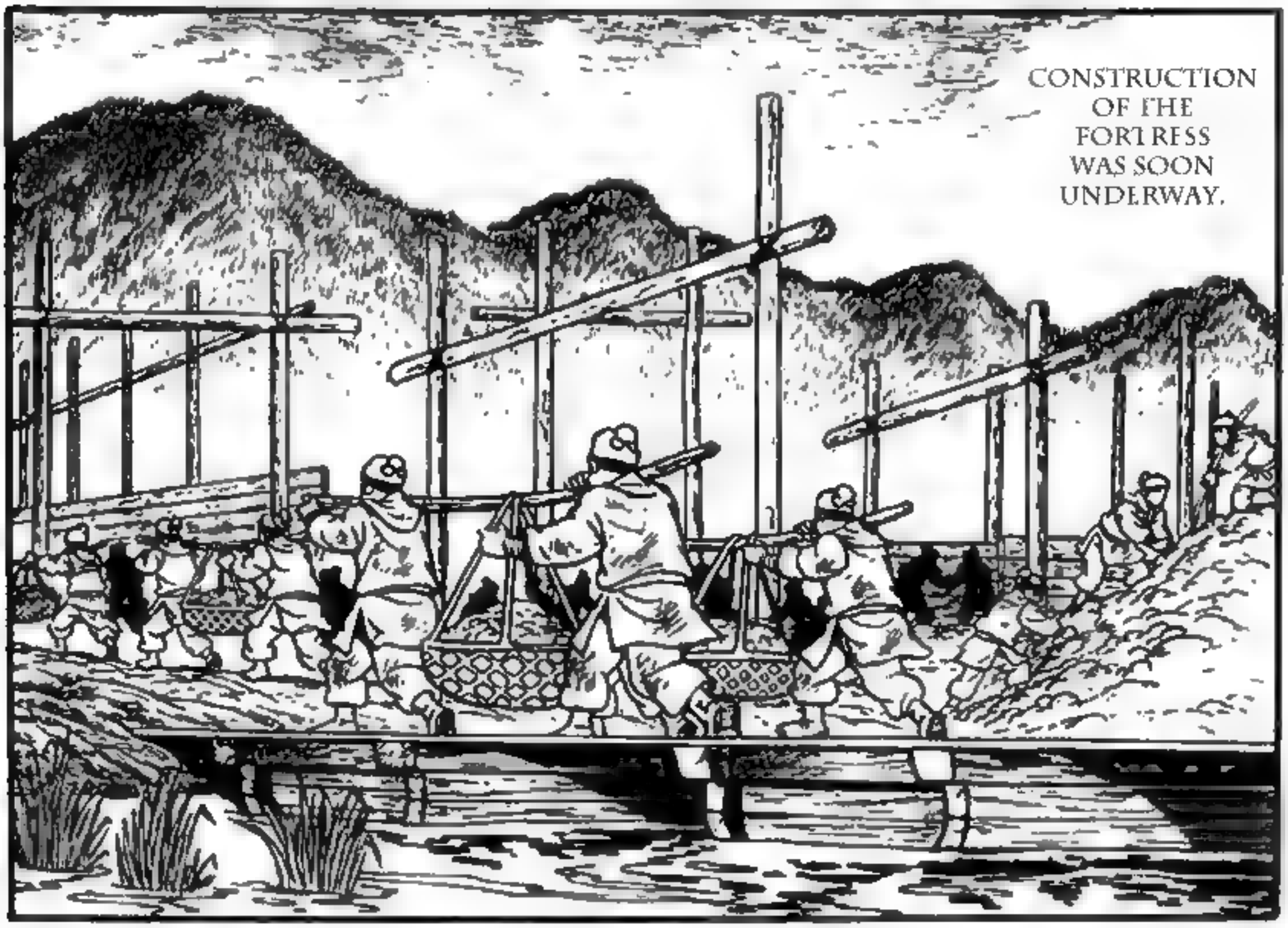
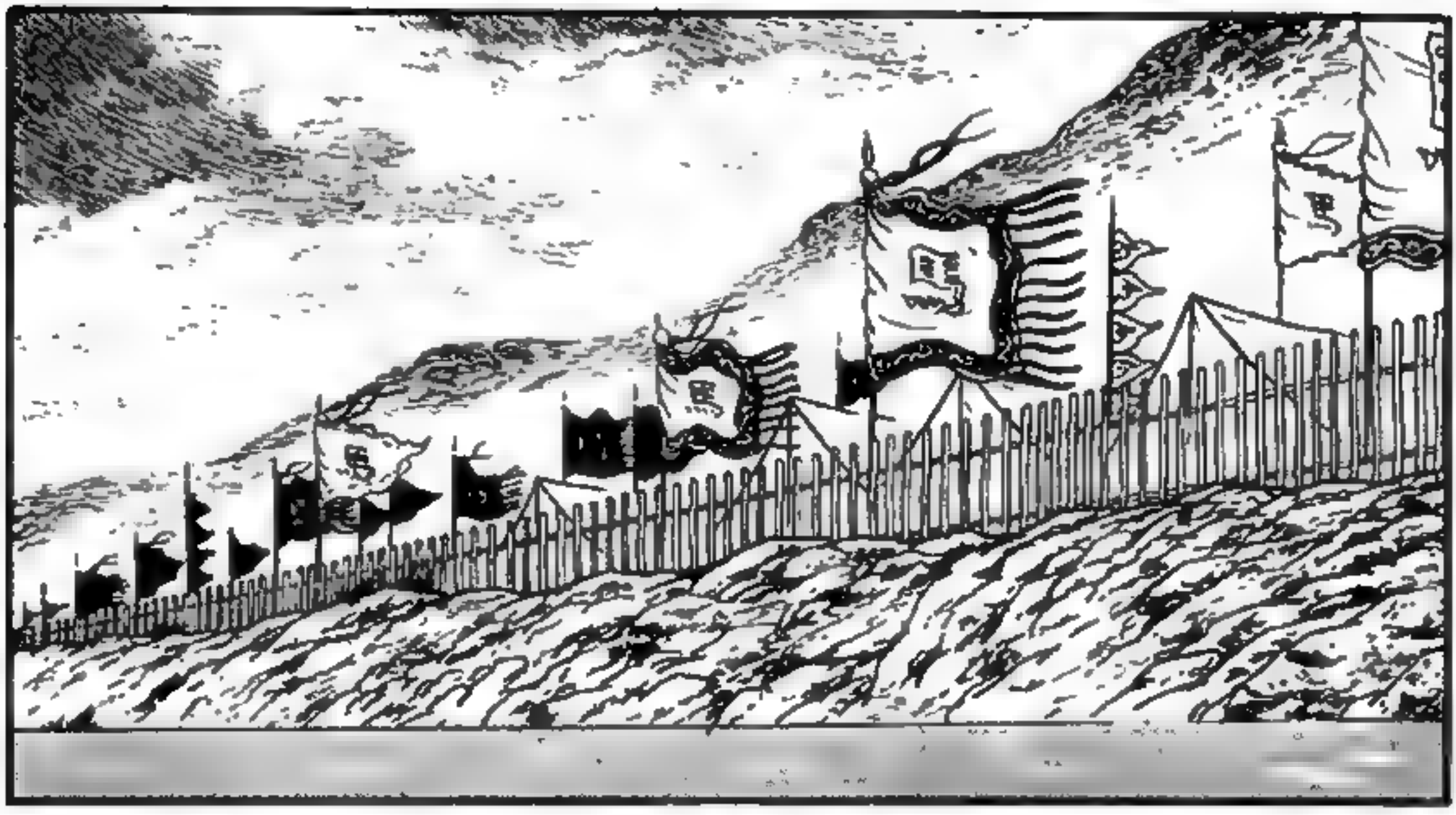

YES, I'VE BEEN THINKING THE SAME.
I BELIEVE THE ONLY WAY TO PUT A STOP TO THESE RAIDS FOR GOOD IS TO BUILD ACTUAL WALLS.

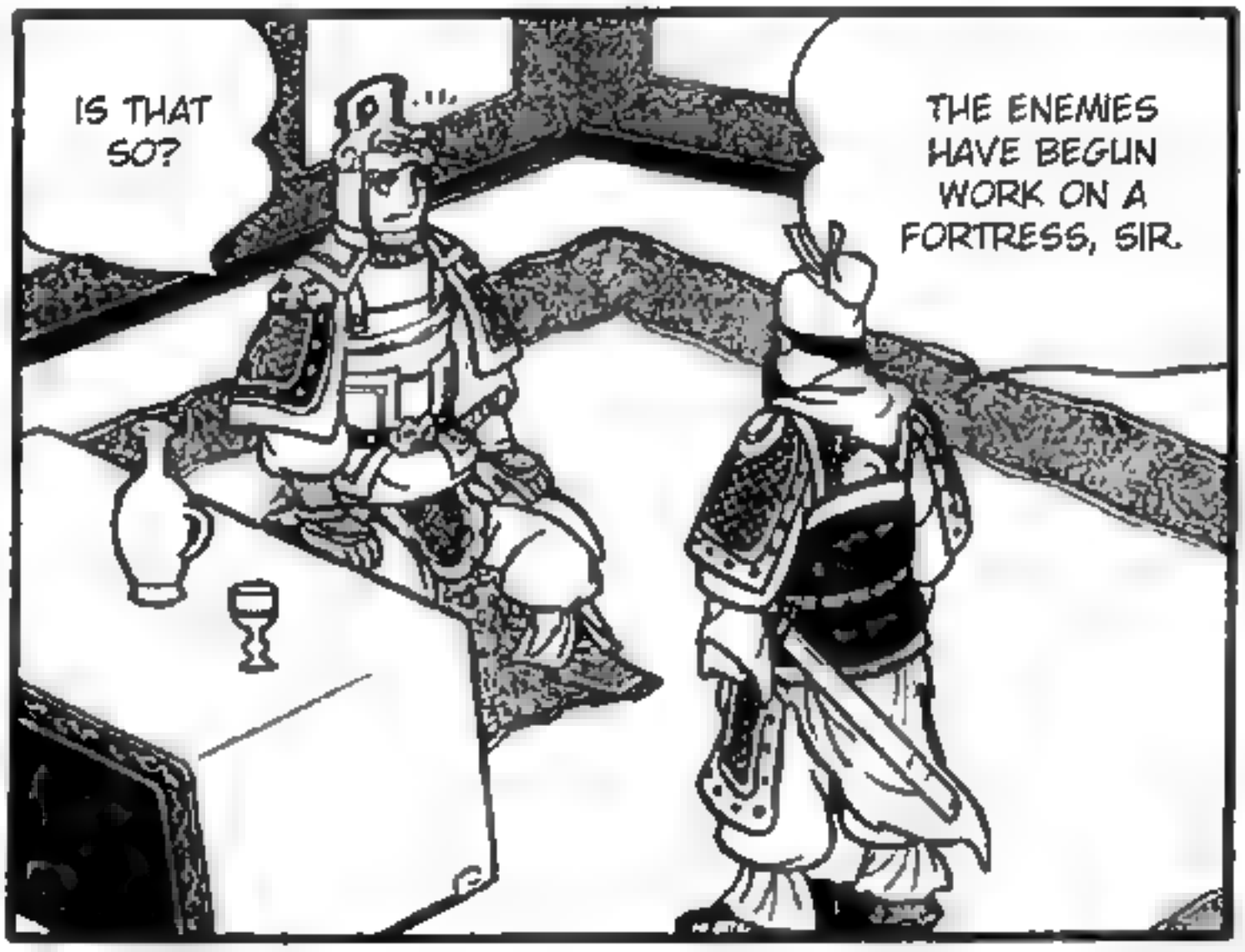
YES?

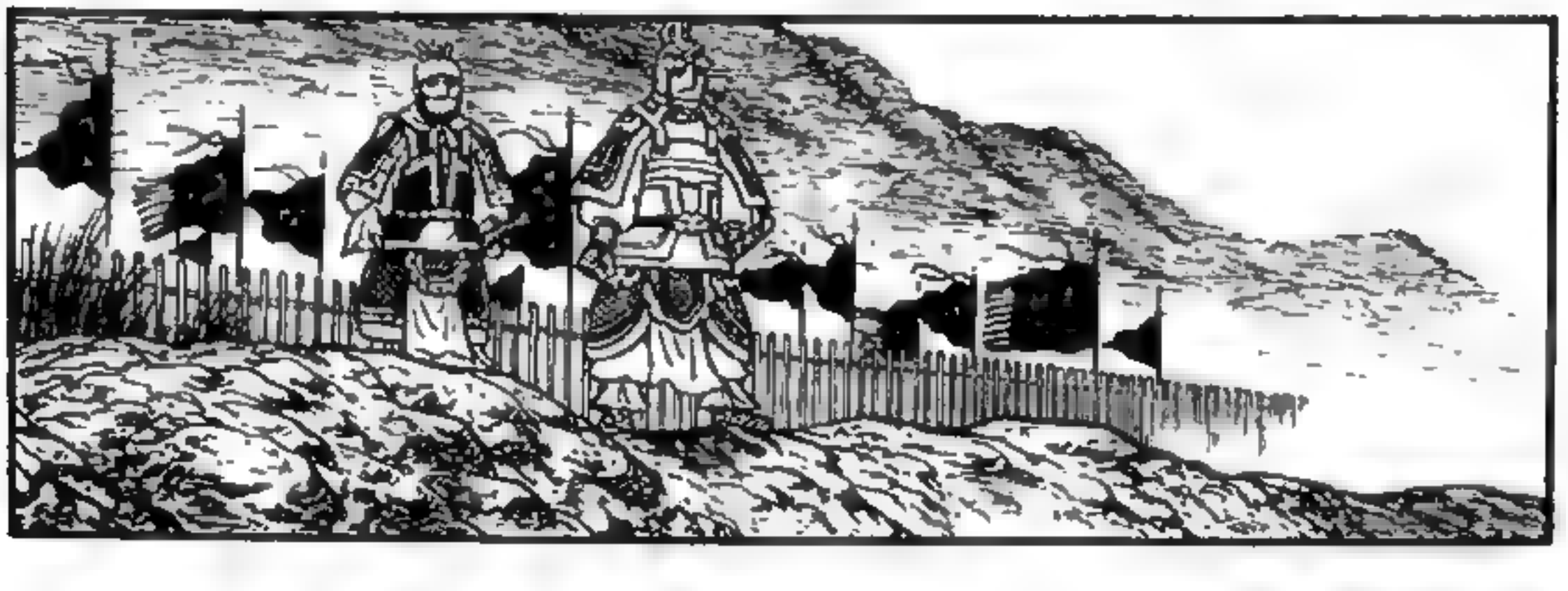
CAO REN!

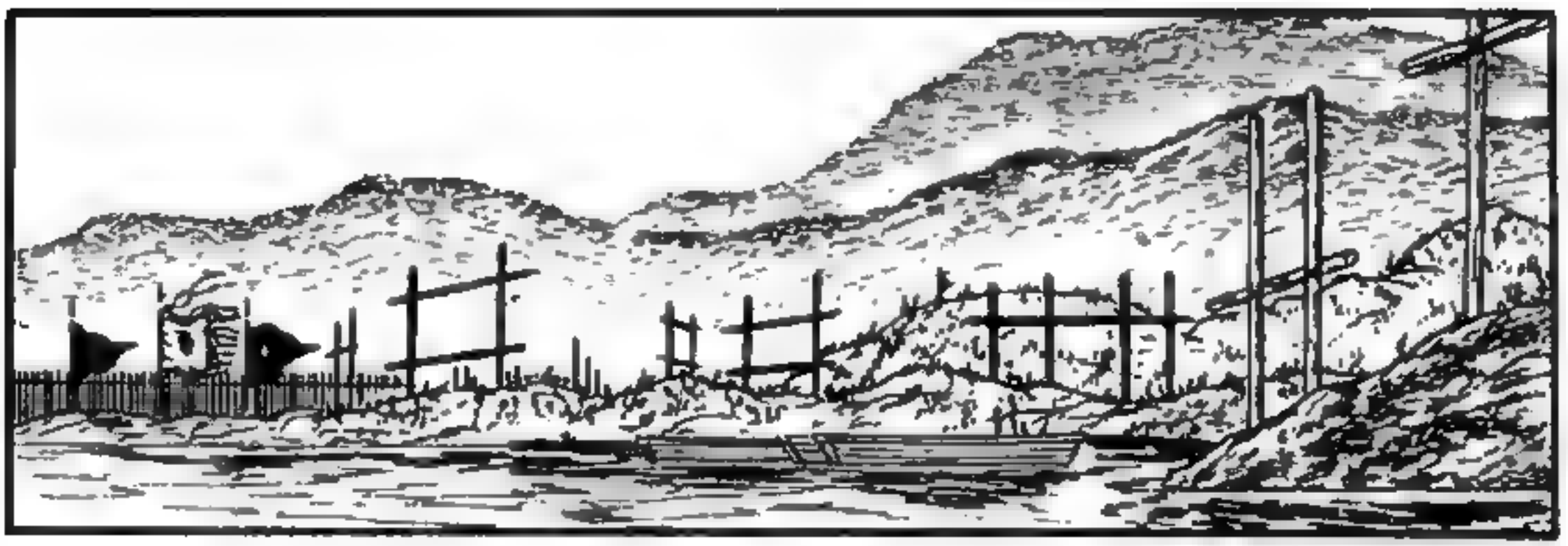

YES, SIR.
I PLACE YOU IN CHARGE OF OVERSEEING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TEMPORARY EARTHEN FORTRESS. I WILL GIVE YOU 20,000 WORKERS FOR THIS TASK.

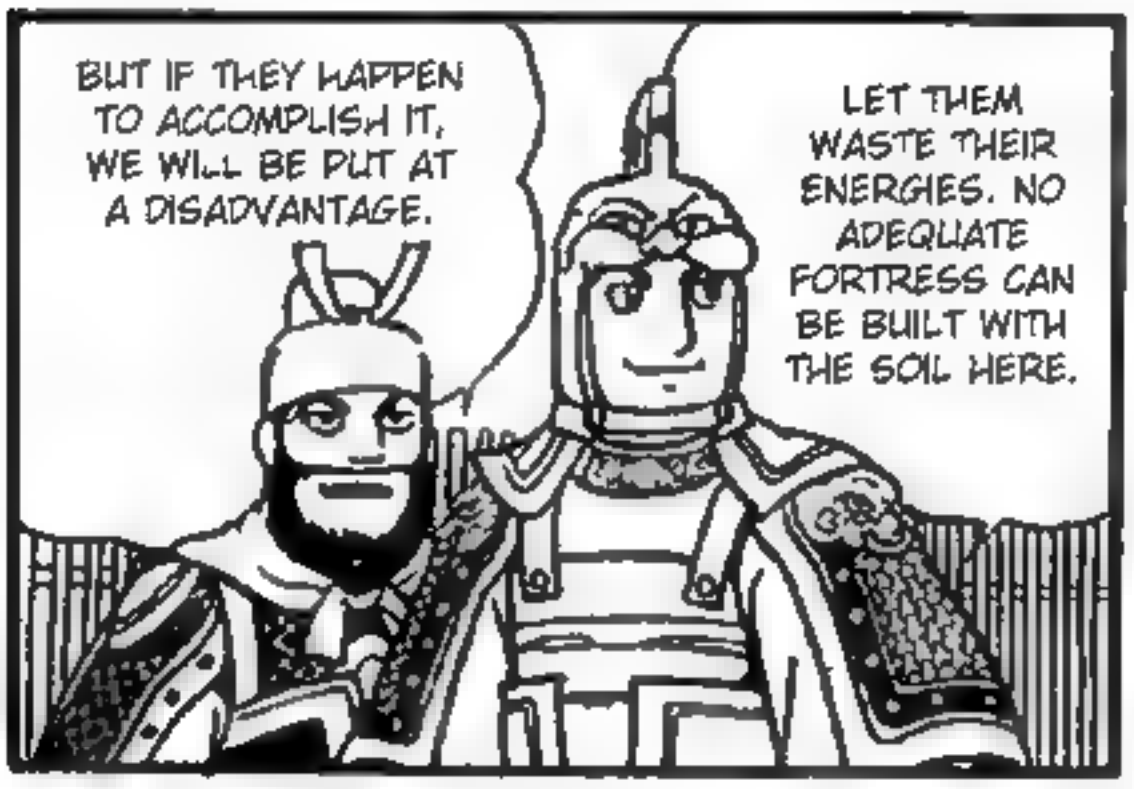

CONSTRUCTION OF THE FORTRESS WAS SOON UNDERWAY.

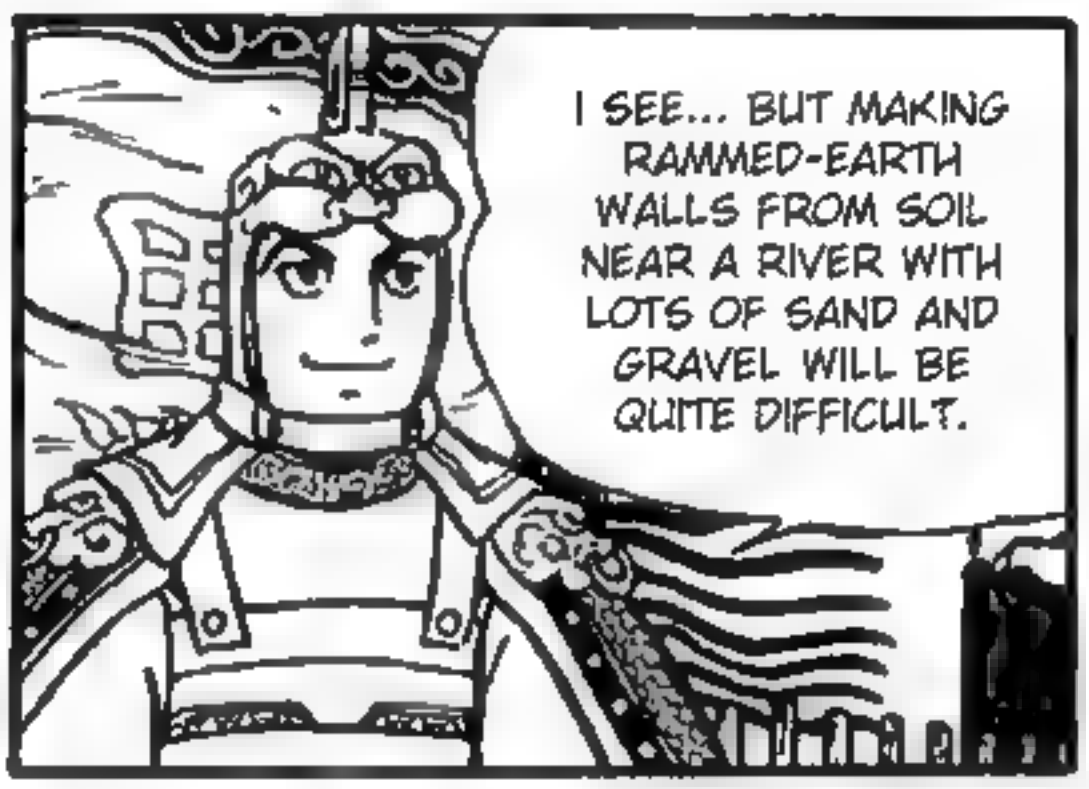


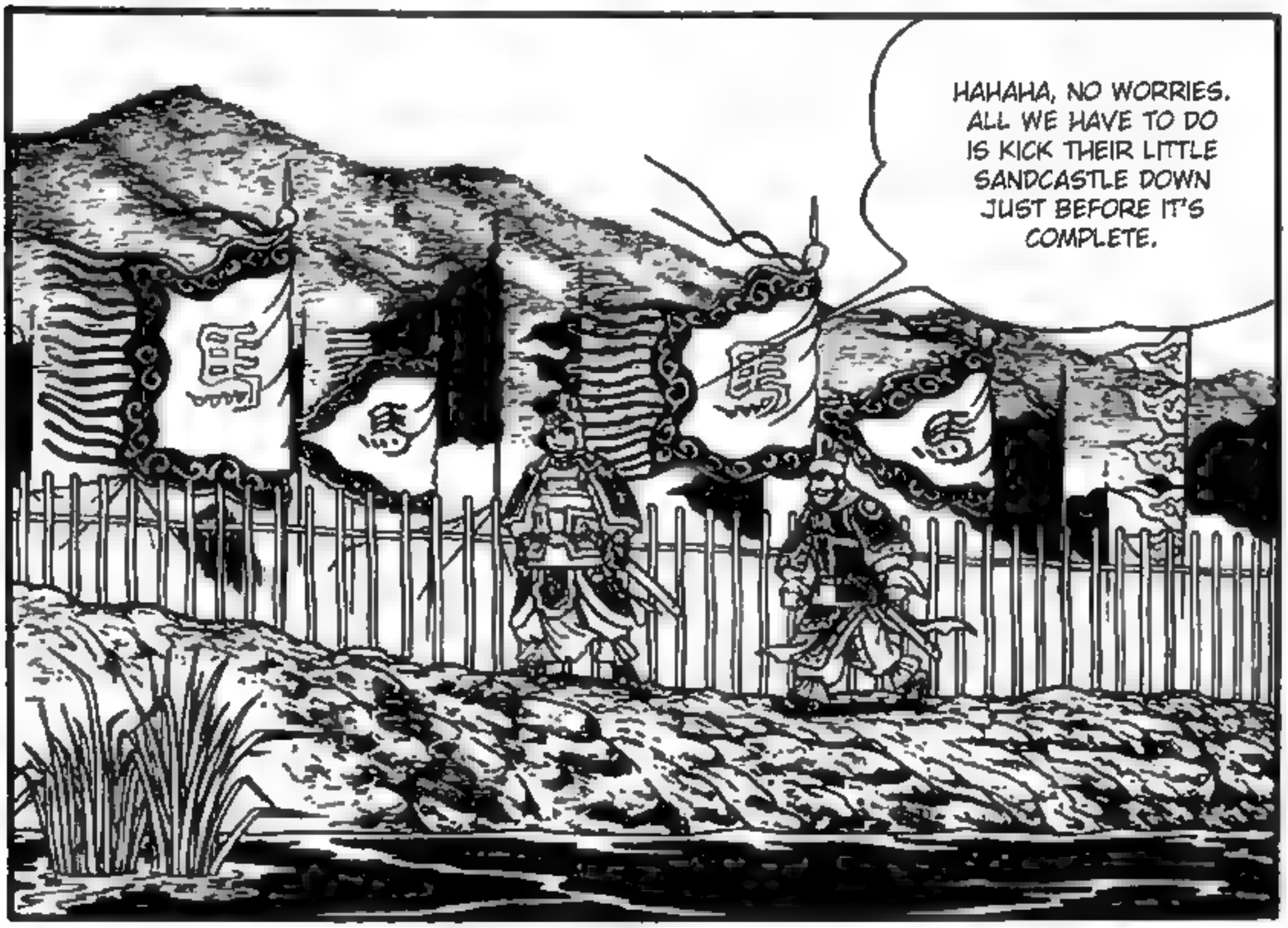

IS THAT SO?
THE ENEMIES HAVE BEGUN WORK ON A FORTRESS, SIR.





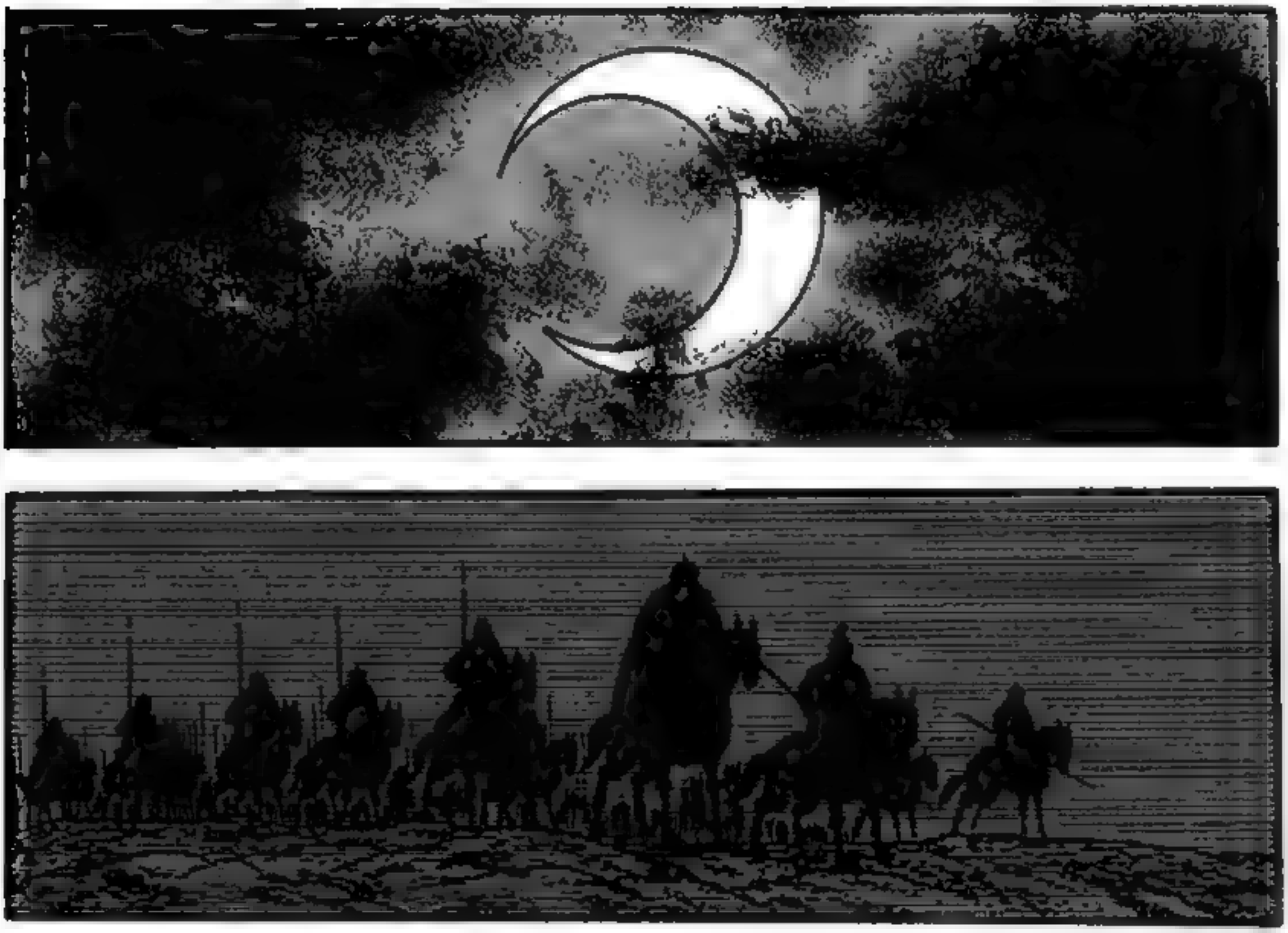

BUT IF THEY HAPPEN TO ACCOMPLISH IT, WE WILL BE PUT AT A DISADVANTAGE.
LET THEM WASTE THEIR ENERGIES. NO ADEQUATE FORTRESS CAN BE BUILT WITH THE SOIL HERE.

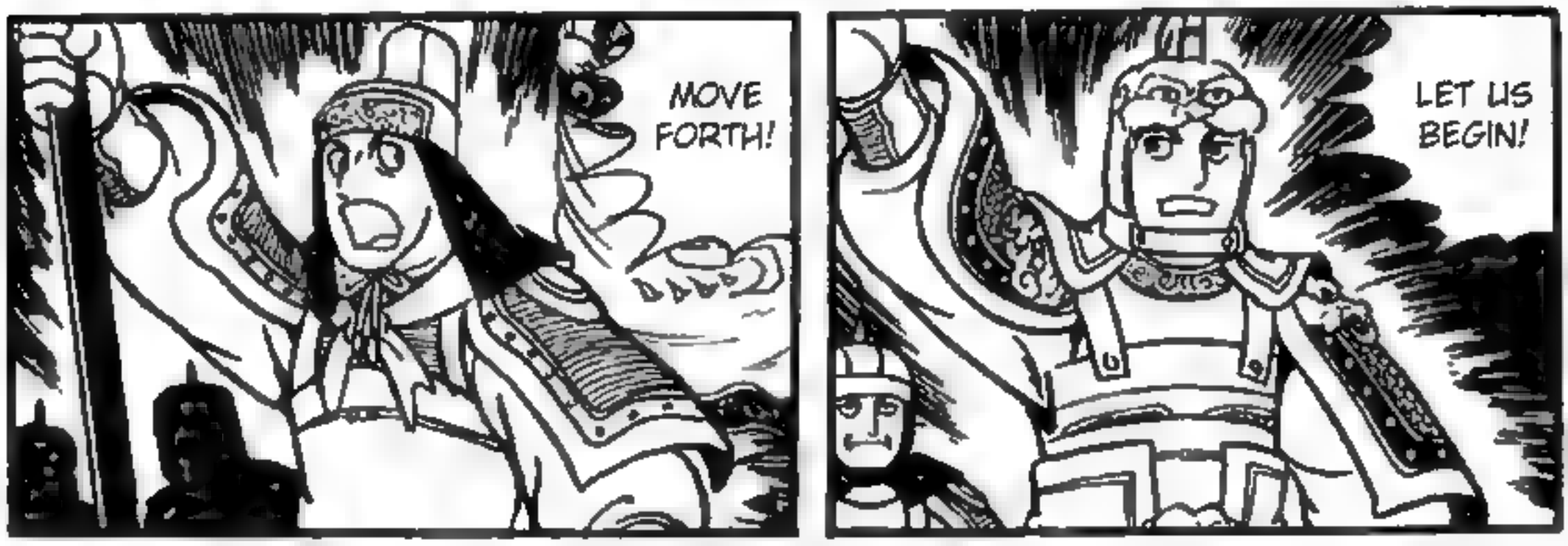

I SEE... BUT MAKING RAMMED-EARTH WALLS FROM SOIL NEAR A RIVER WITH LOTS OF SAND AND GRAVEL WILL BE QUITE DIFFICULT.

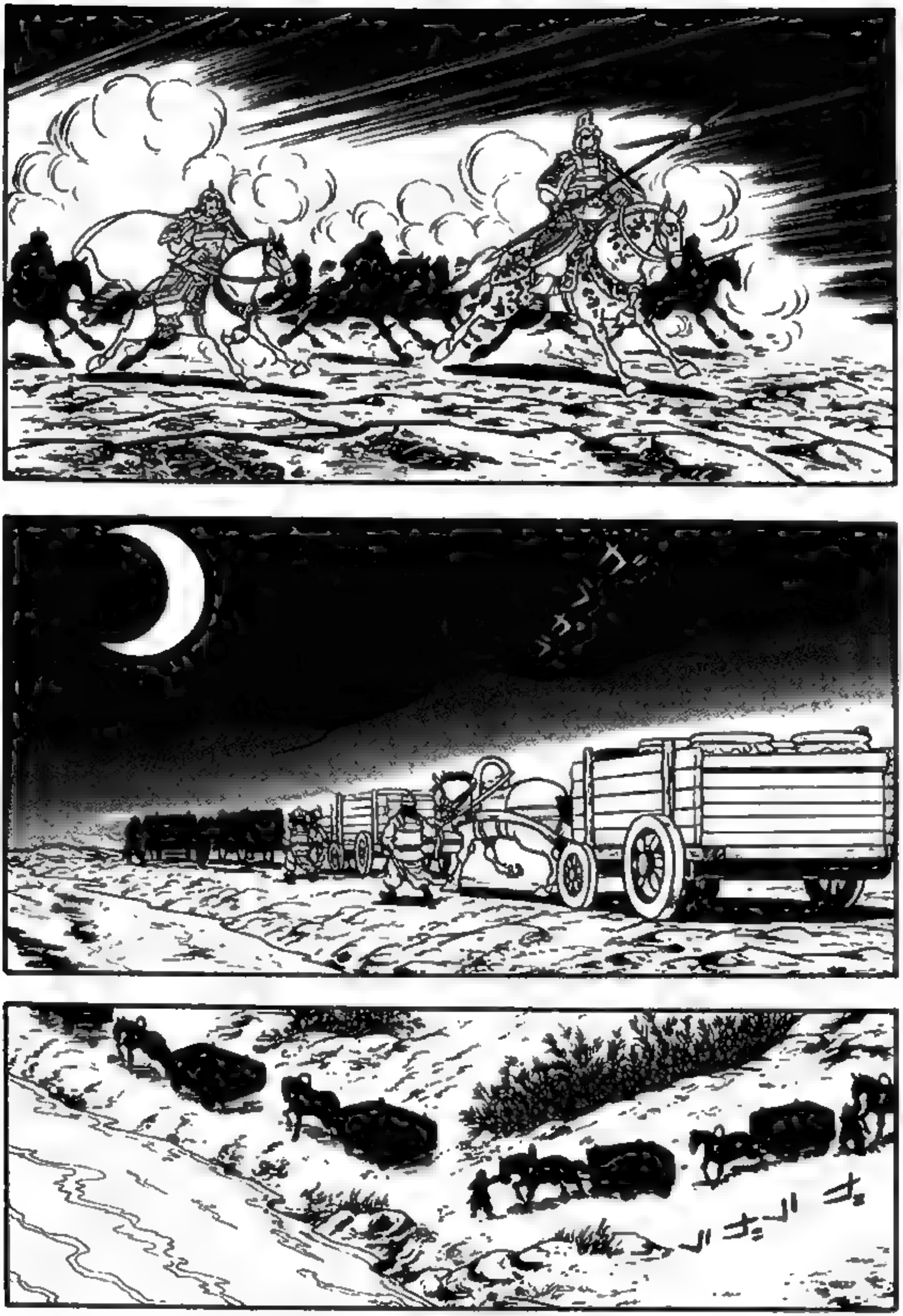

HAHAHA, NO WORRIES. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS KICK THEIR LITTLE SANDCASTLE DOWN JUST BEFORE IT'S COMPLETE.

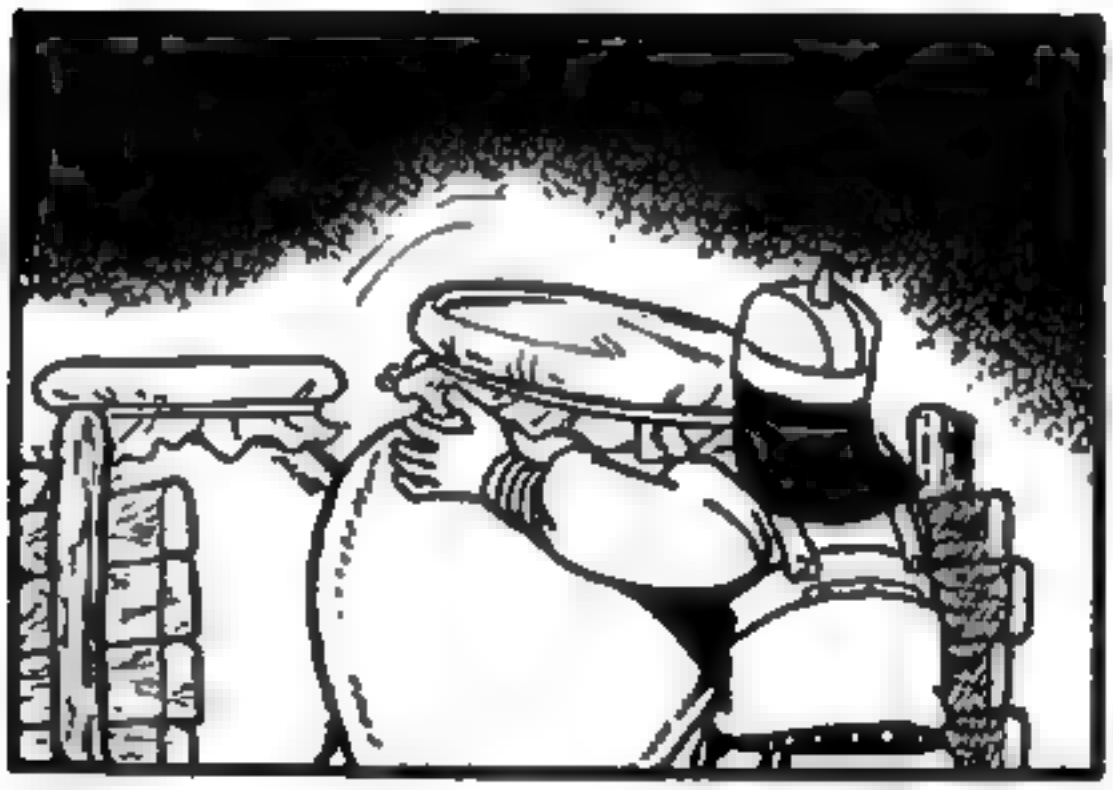
ATTACK BY FIRE AND WATER

YES, SIR.
CALL FORTH ALL THE OFFICERS.
YES, SIR.
AT LAST, THE TIME TO DESTROY THEIR SANDCASTLE HAS COME. ACT AS WE PLANNED EARLIER.

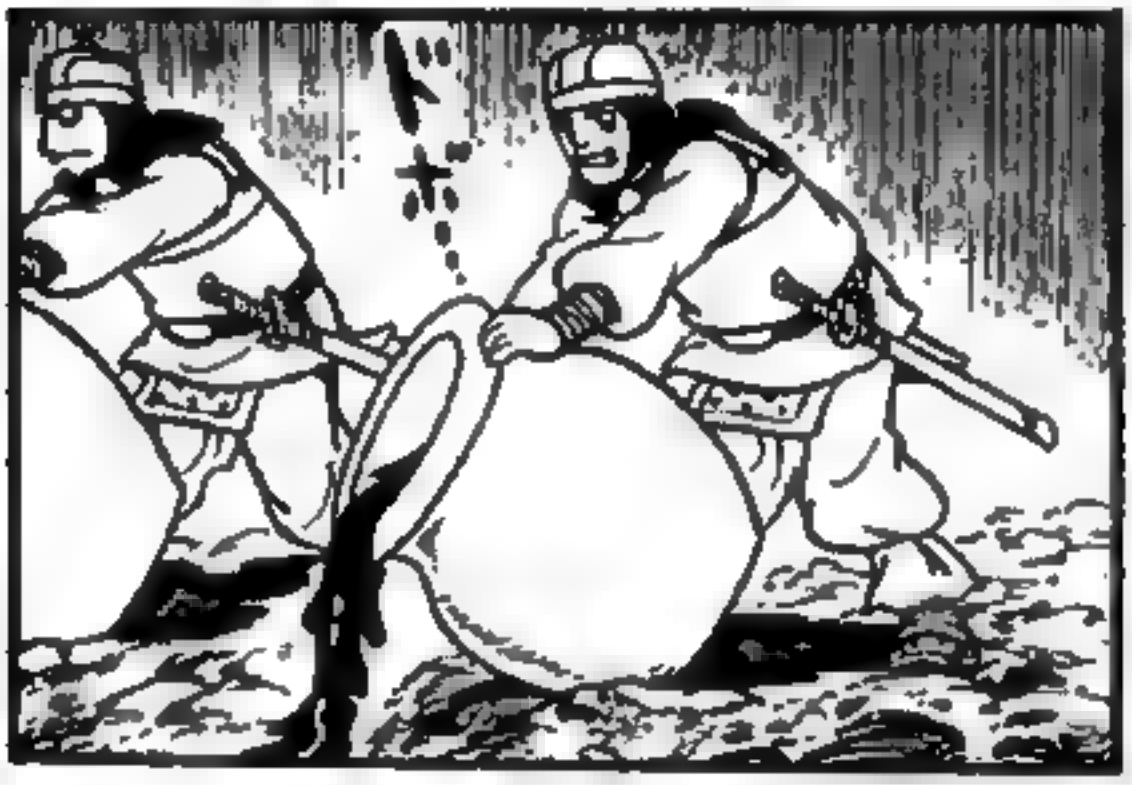


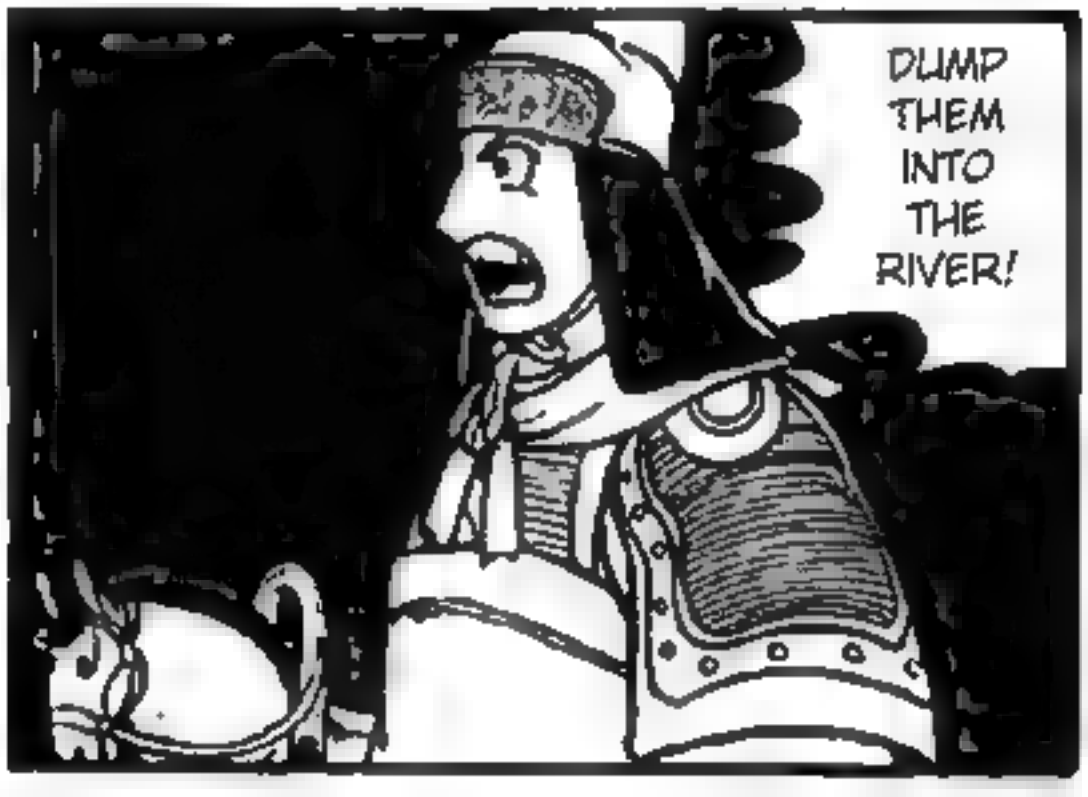

MOVE FORTH!
LET US BEGIN!

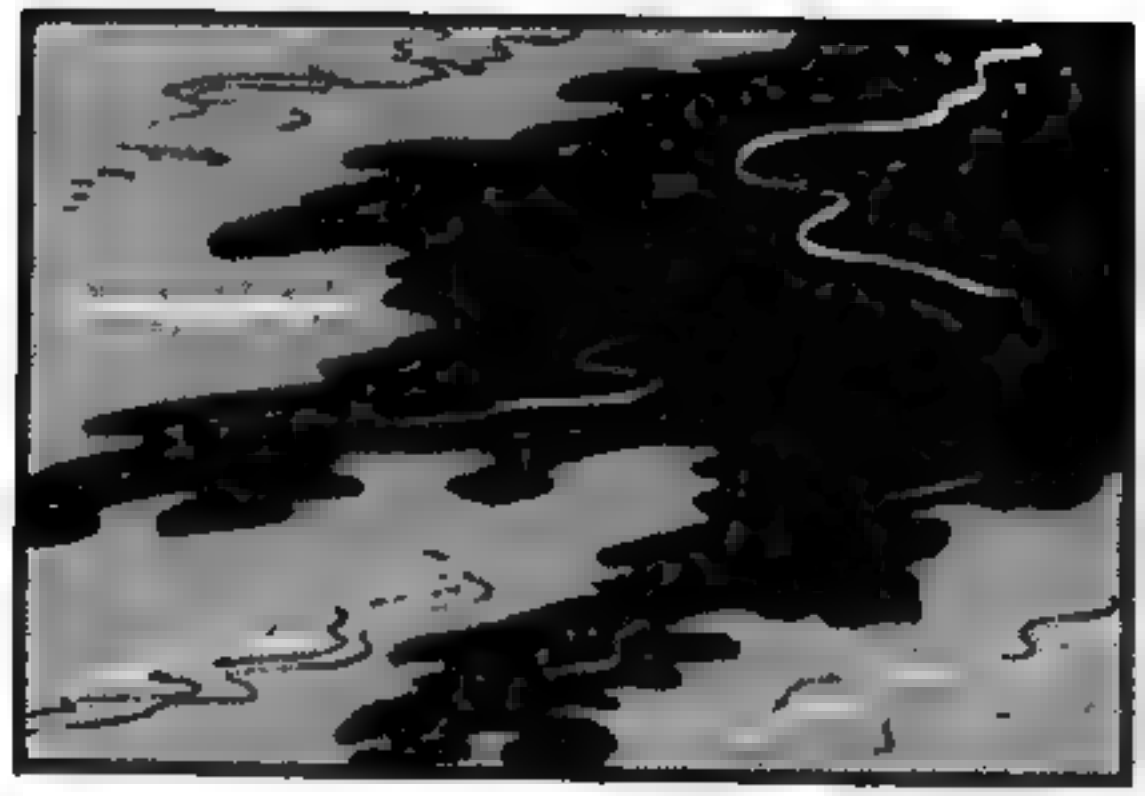




UNLOAD
THE POTS!




DUMP
THEM
INTO
THE
RIVER!



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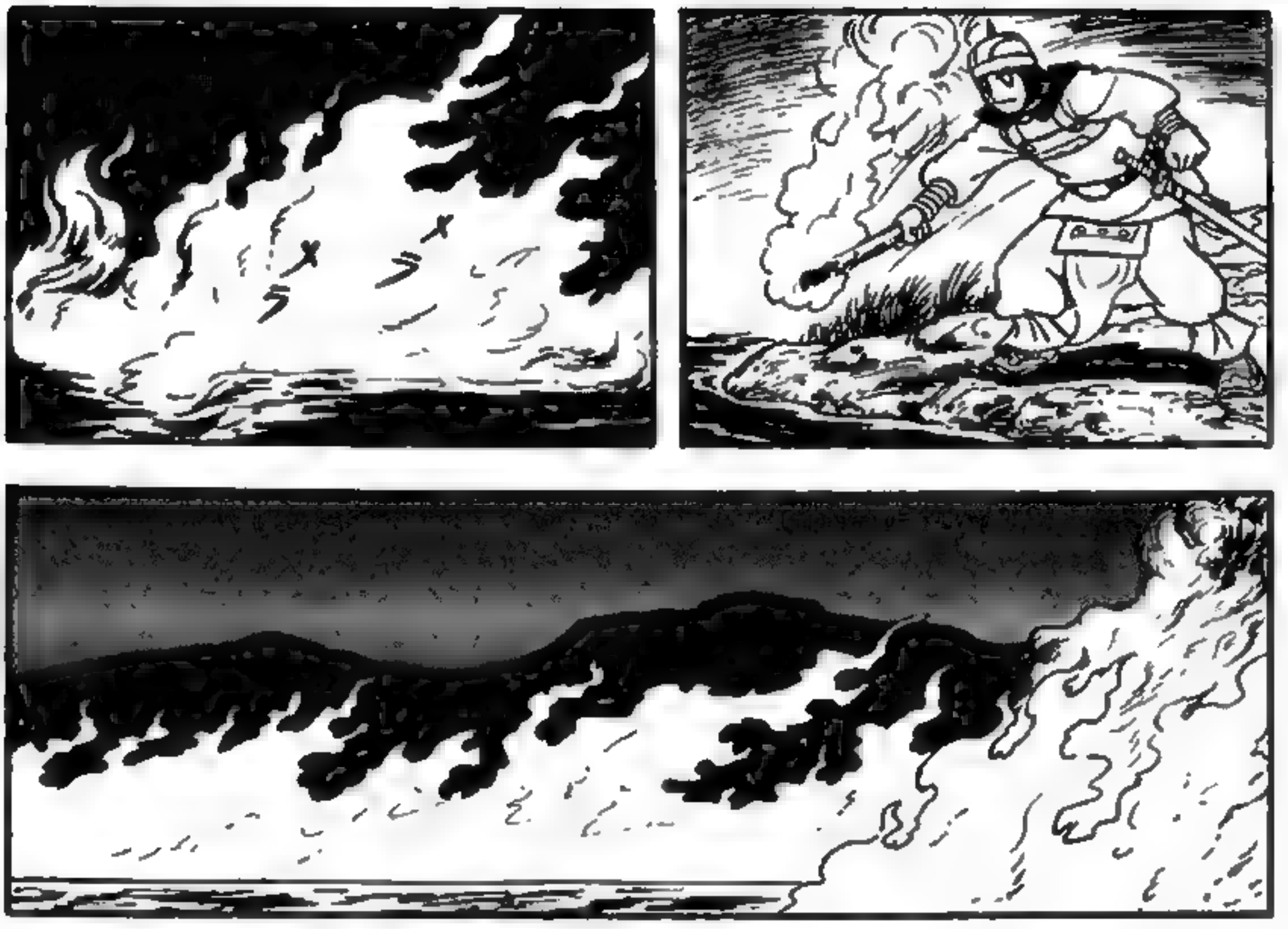
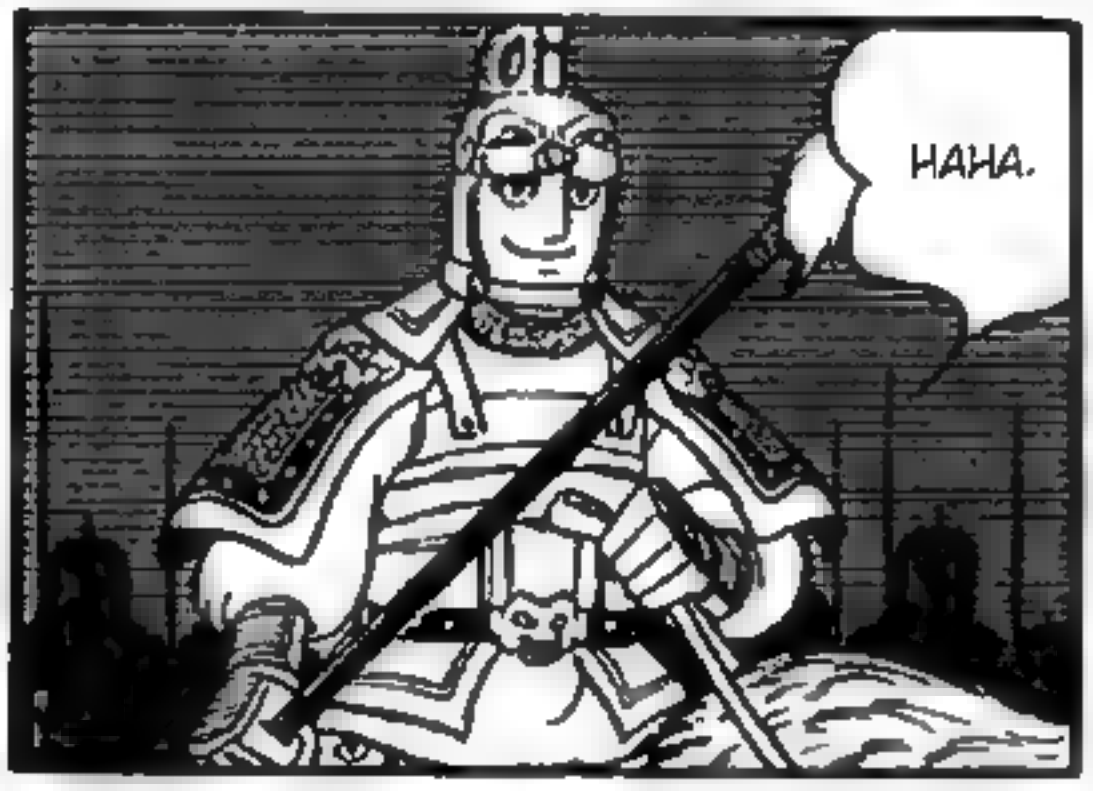
NOW
LIGHT IT
ON FIRE!


THE RIVER'S ABLAZE!
AGHH!

B-BUT HOW, SIR!?

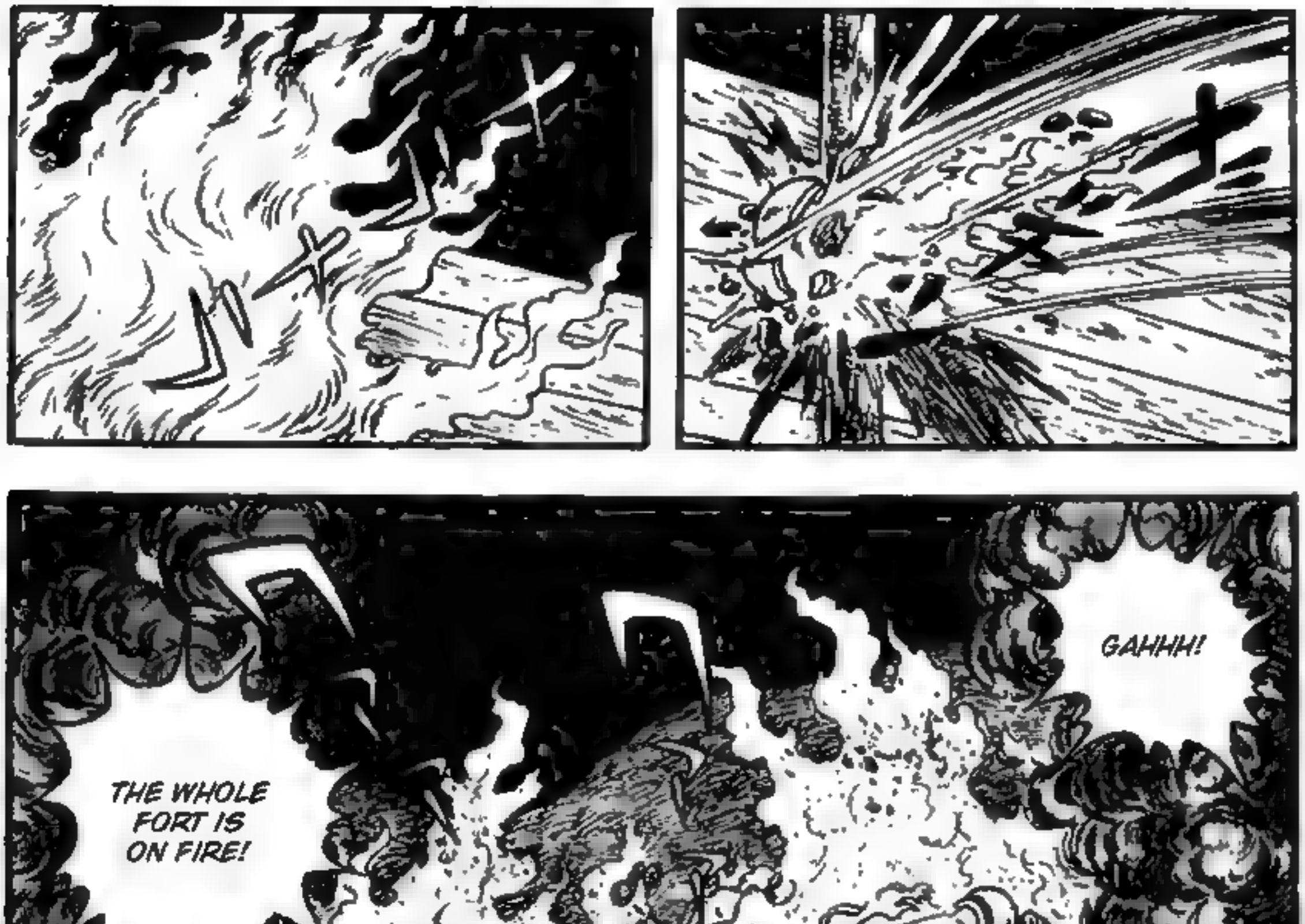
PUT THE FIRE OUT!

NOW!


HAHA.

ENEMY
ATTACK!

ブーン


THE WHOLE FORT IS ON FIRE!
GAHHH!
S.O.S.

DESTROYED
SO CLOSE TO
COMPLETION...

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曹

HMM... YES, THE ENEMIES WOULD HAVE TROUBLE TRYING TO BURN THAT DOWN.

THE NEED FOR A WALLED FORTRESS STILL REMAINS, CHANCELLOR. THUS I PROPOSE WE TRY ONCE AGAIN, THIS TIME DIGGING DEEPER UNDERGROUND FOR BETTER, COMPACT SOIL THAT WE CAN USE TO BUILD A MUD FORTRESS.

YES, SIR.

ALRIGHT. LET'S INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WORKERS TO 30,000 AND BUILD IT QUICKLY.

AND SO CONSTRUCTION BEGAN ONCE MORE.

AND COMPACTED TIGHTLY AS MUD TO BUILD WALLS

THE GROUND WAS DUG UP.

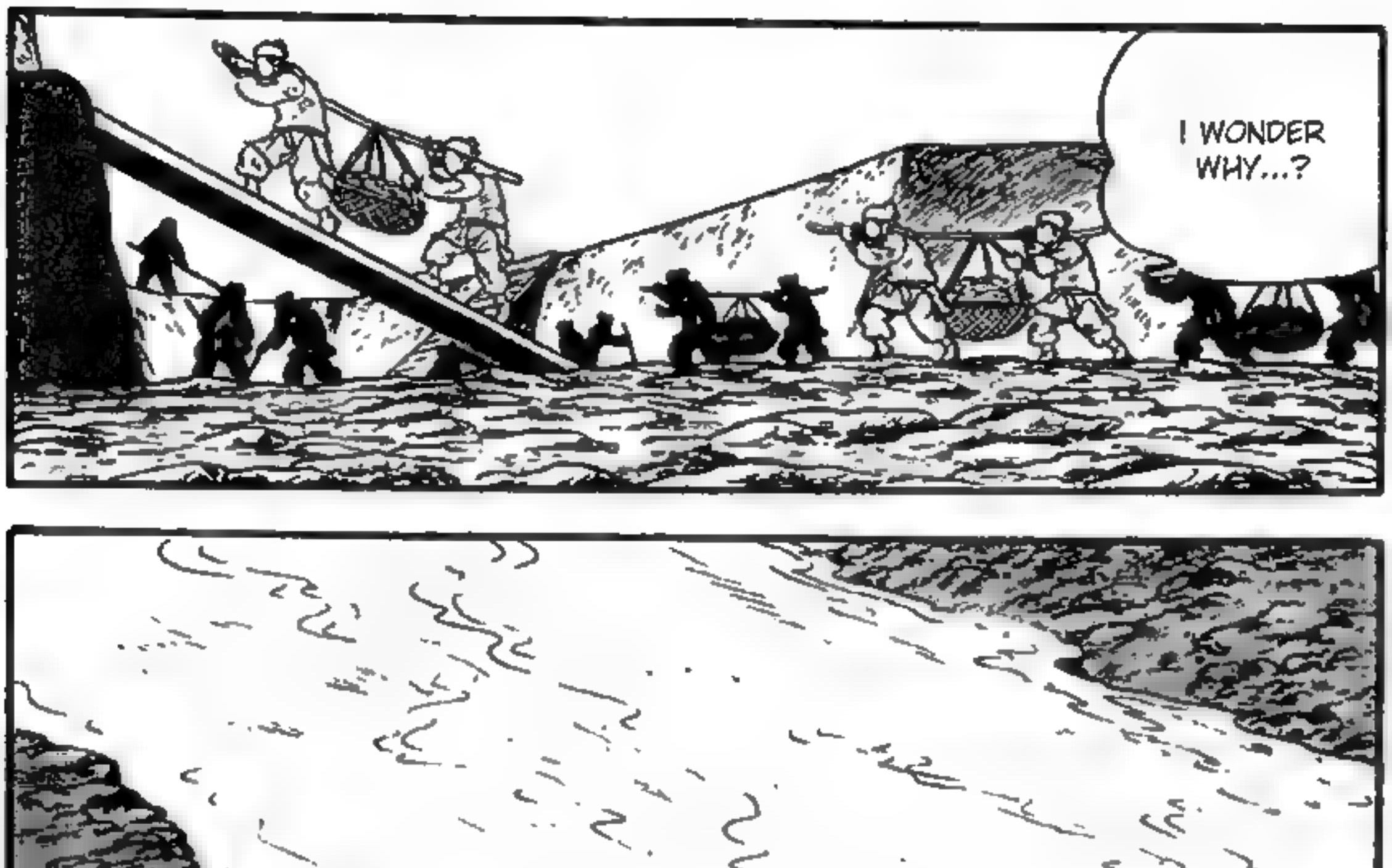
SOON, THE FORTRESS BEGAN TO TAKE THE SHAPE AKIN TO A STEP-PYRAMID

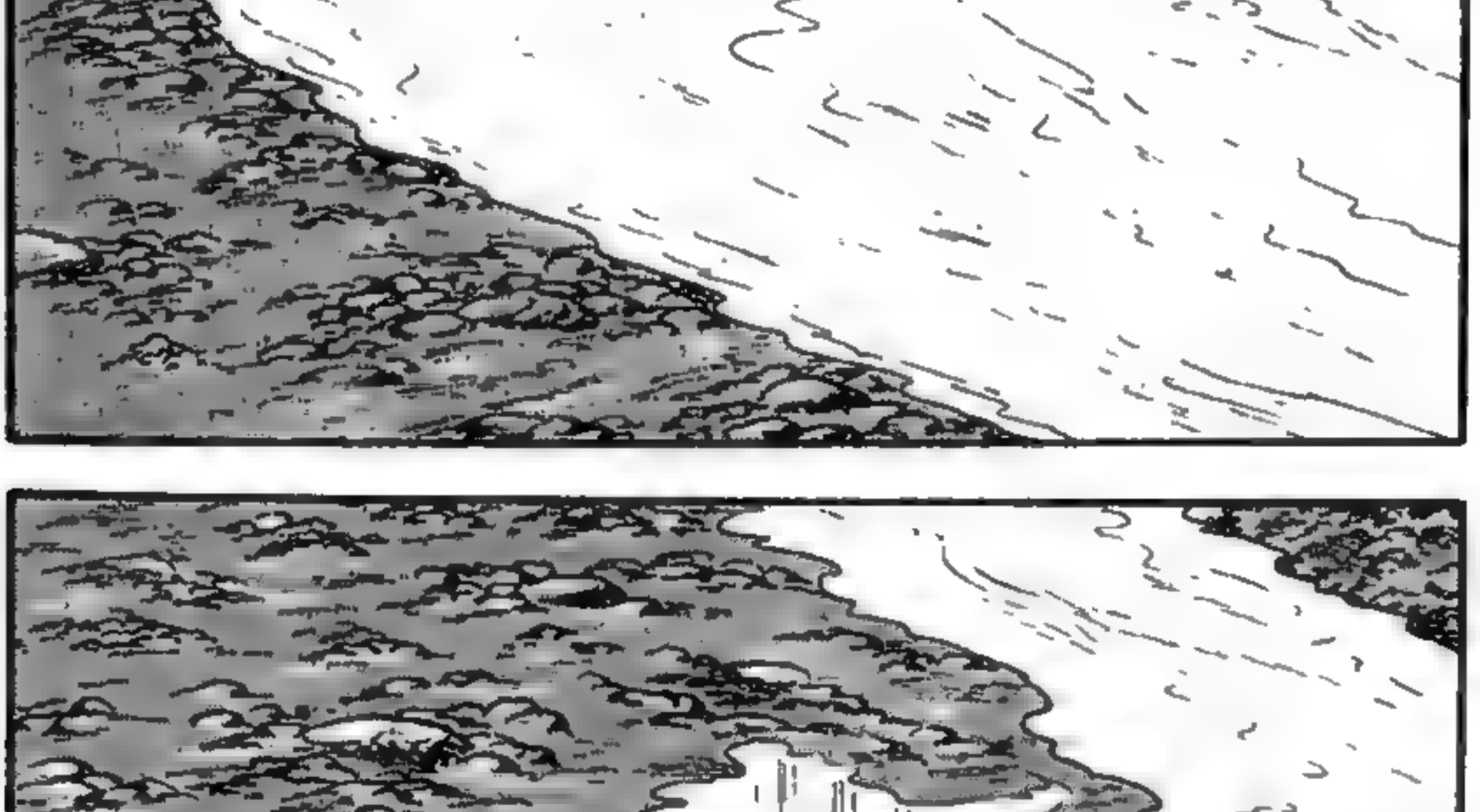
HM?

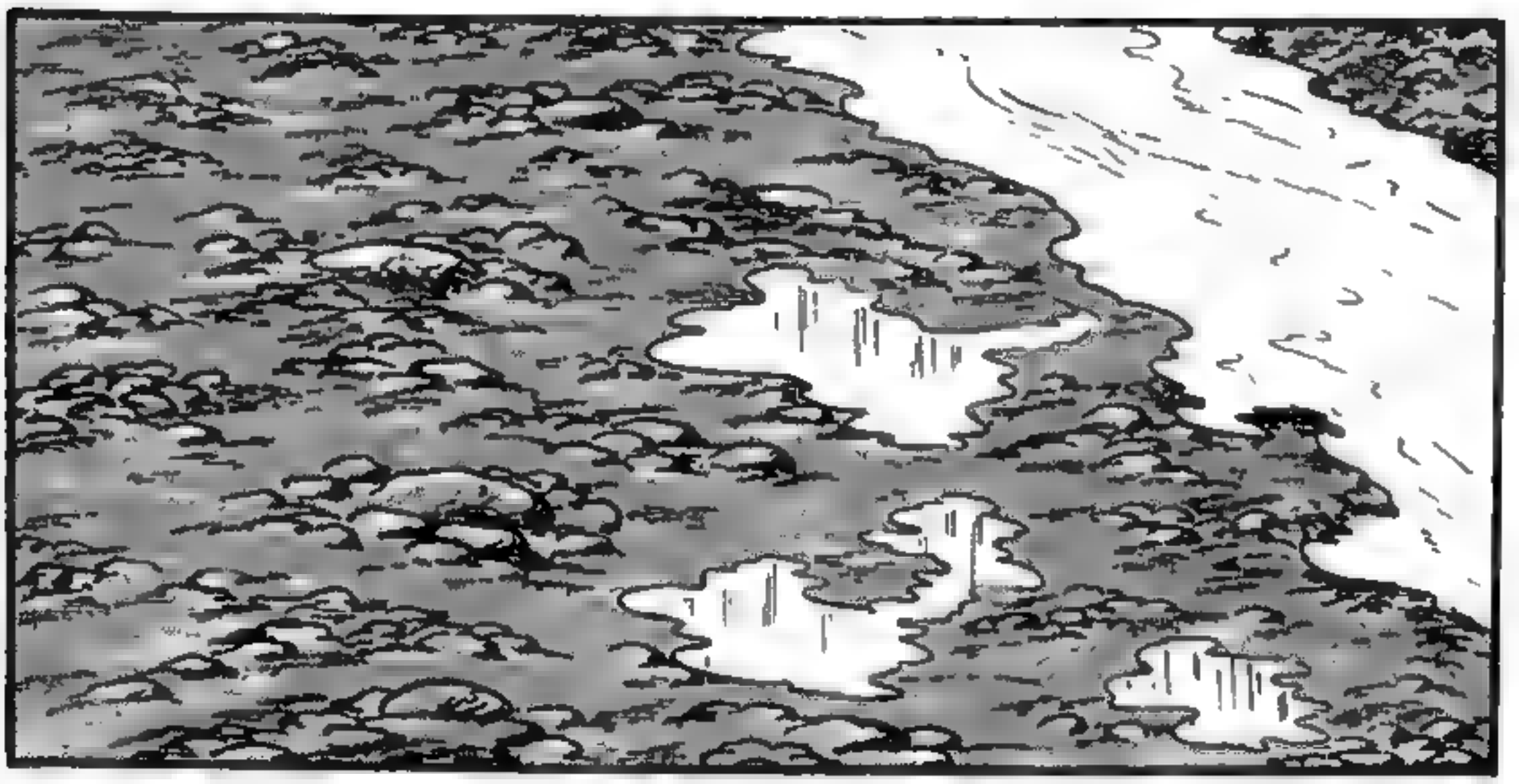
ONE, TWO. ONE, TWO.

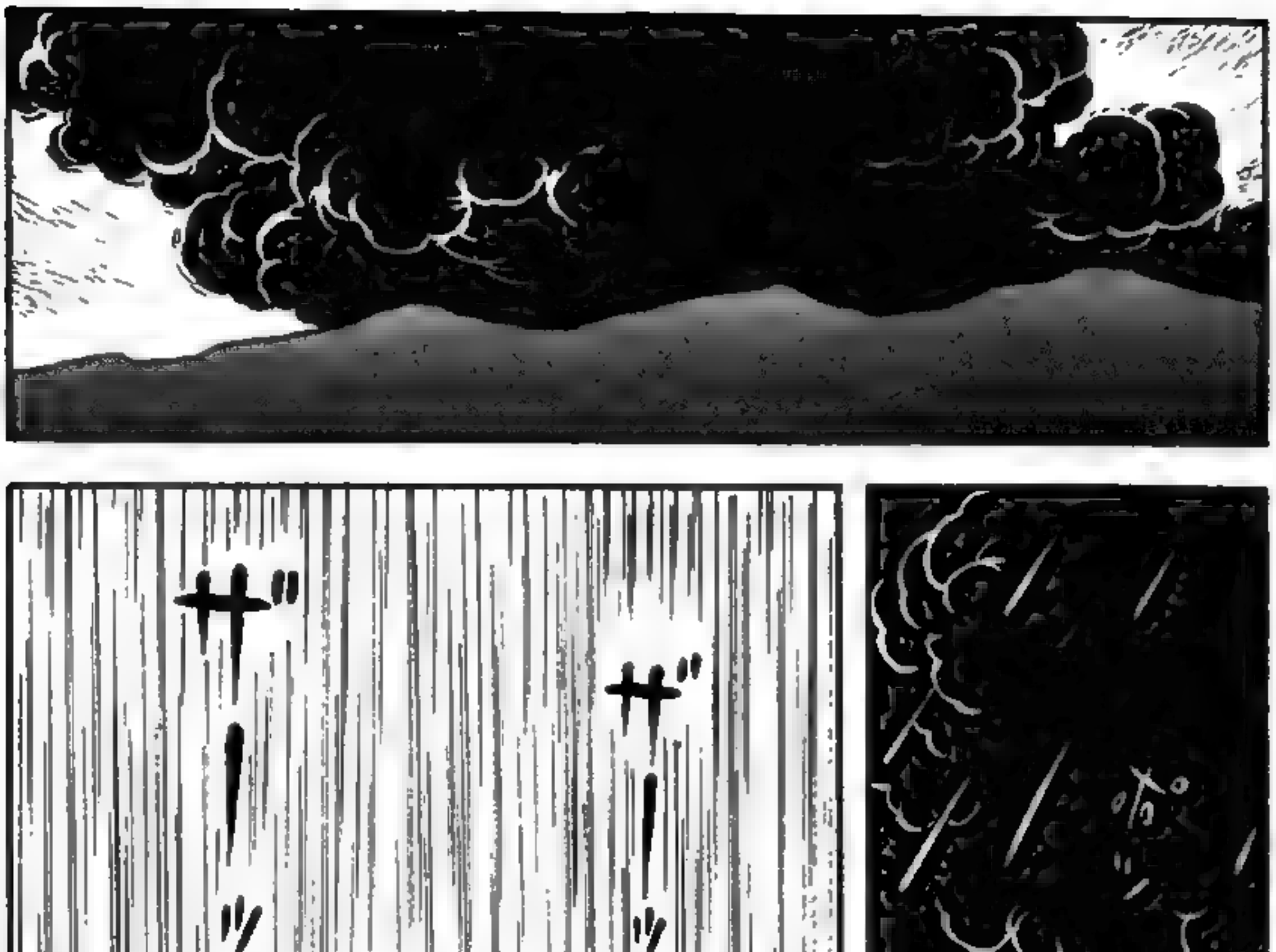
YOU'RE RIGHT. THE RIVER SEEMS TO BE RECEDING.

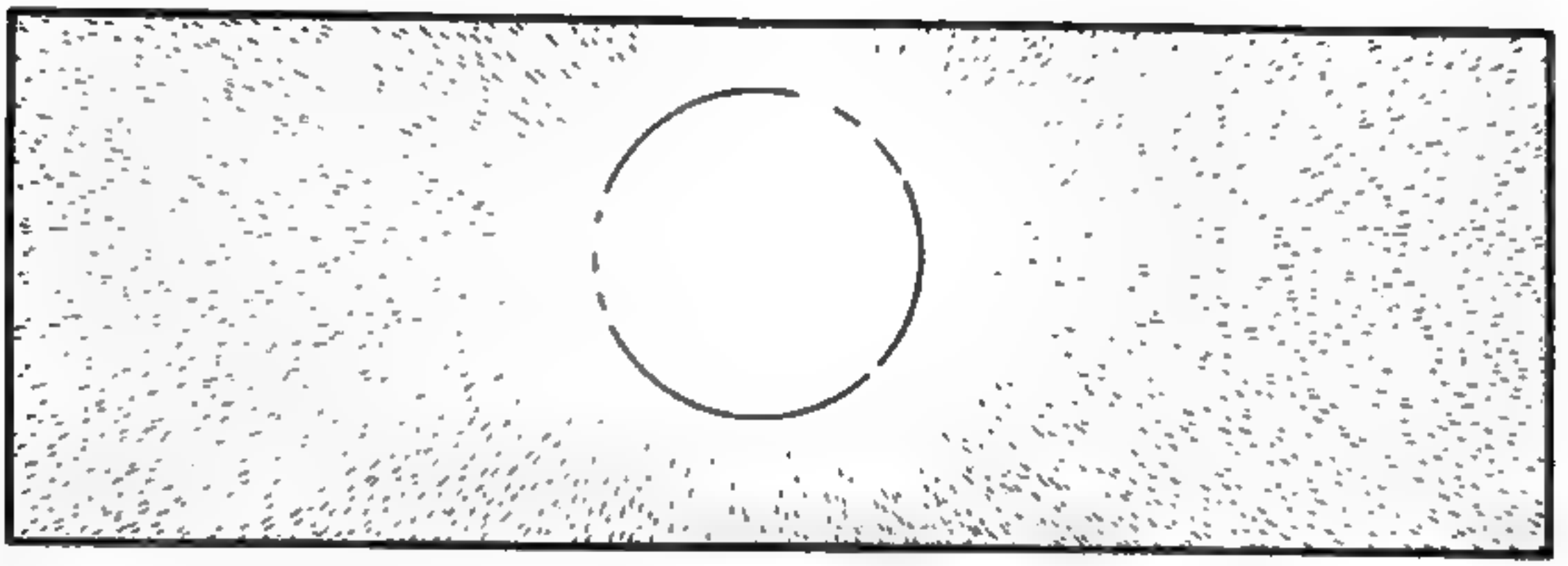
HEY, DIDN'T THE RIVER COME ALL THE WAY UP TO HERE JUST YESTERDAY?


I WONDER WHY...?

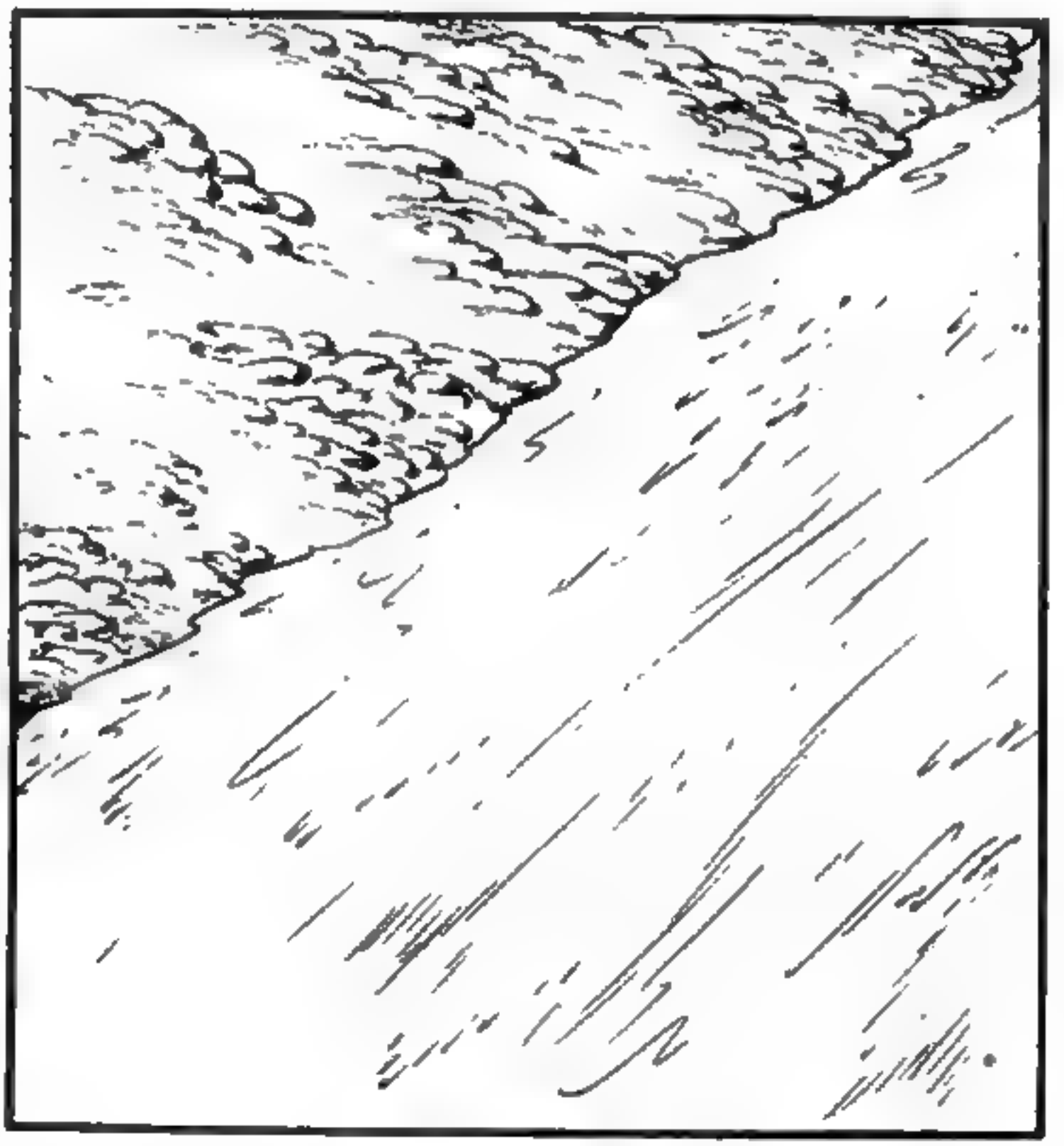





IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO WORK LIKE THIS!
WHAT A DOWNPOUR!



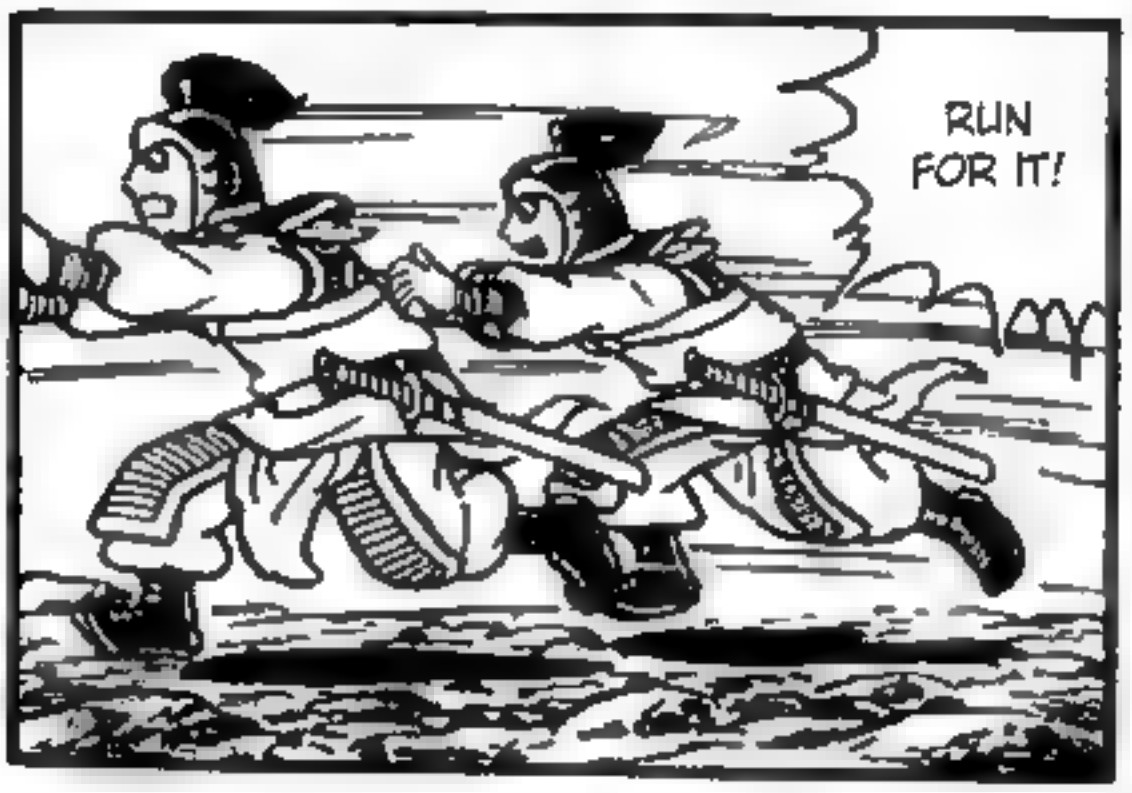
LOOK. EVEN THOUGH IT RAINED ALL DAY YESTERDAY, THE RIVER'S ONLY THIS BIG. DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S STRANGE?



YEAH, LET'S.
I THINK WE OUGHT TO INVESTIGATE A LITTLE.

YEAH, SOMETHING'S OFF. IT'S ONLY NATURAL THERE SHOULD BE SOME FLOODING AFTER ALL THAT RAIN.

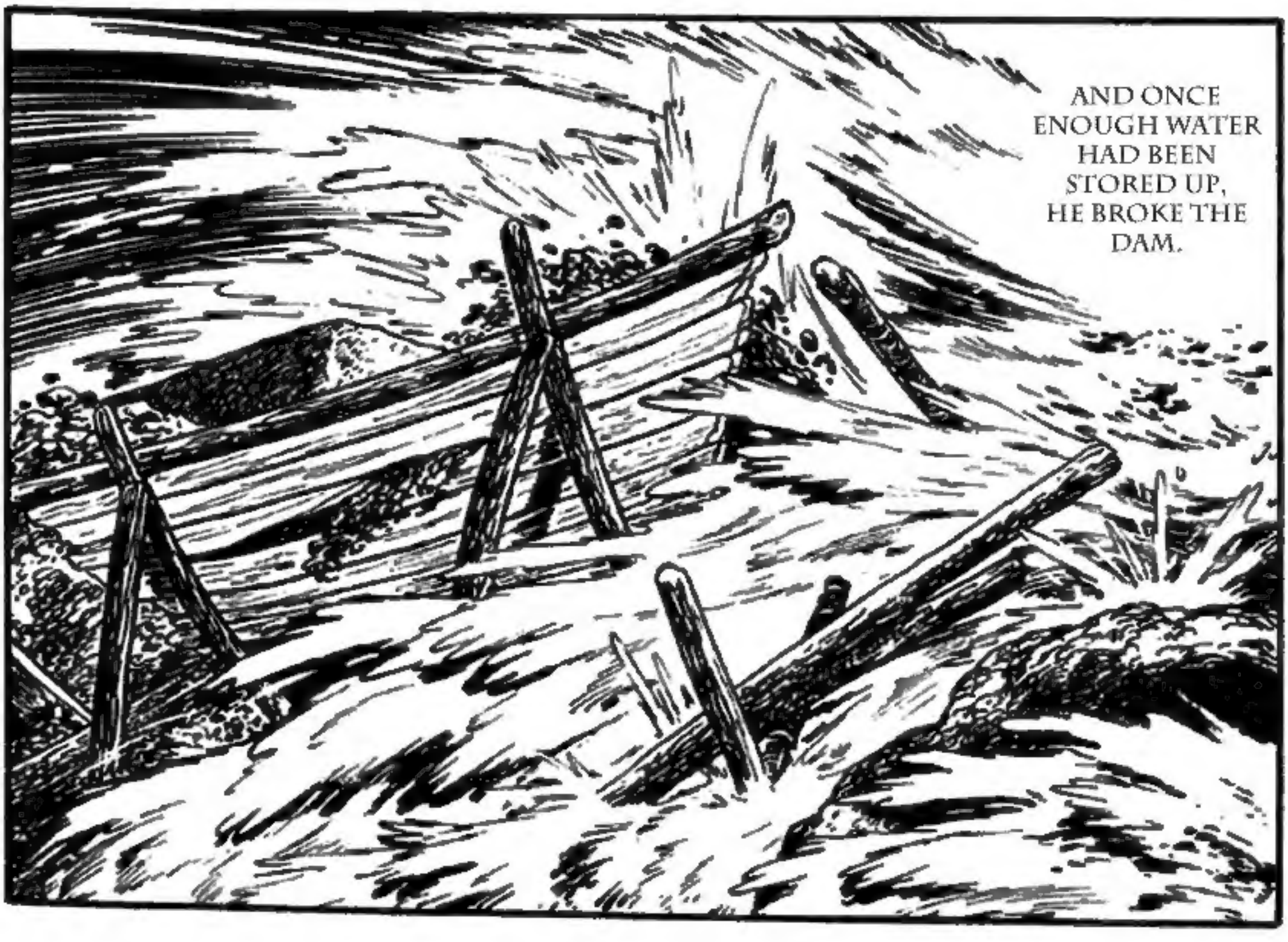
?
HM?

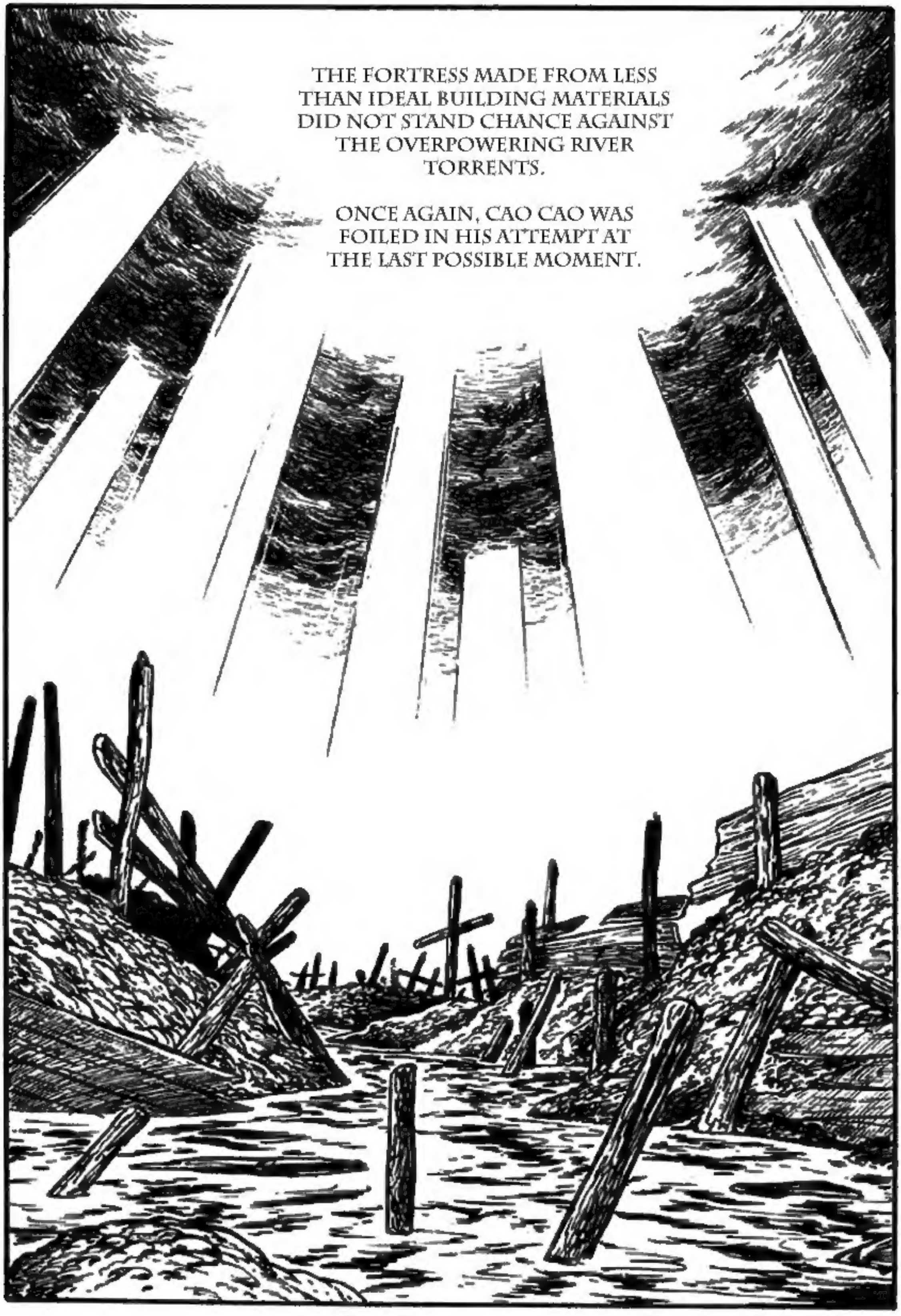

RUN FOR IT!

IT'S A TSUNAMI!

AGHHH!

EVER SINCE HEARING THAT CAO CAO WAS BUILDING A MUD FORTRESS, MA CHAO HAD DAMMED THE RIVER UPSTREAM.


AND ONCE ENOUGH WATER HAD BEEN STORED UP, HE BROKE THE DAM.


THE FORTRESS MADE FROM LESS
THAN IDEAL BUILDING MATERIALS
DID NOT STAND CHANCE AGAINST
THE OVERPOWERING RIVER
TORRENTS.
ONCE AGAIN, CAO CAO WAS
FOILED IN HIS ATTEMPT AT
THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT.

TRANSLATED BY HOX

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三国志

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横山 光輝

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eBOOK Initiative Japan Co.,Ltd.
〒101-0062　東京都千代田区神田駿河台 2-9-18
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